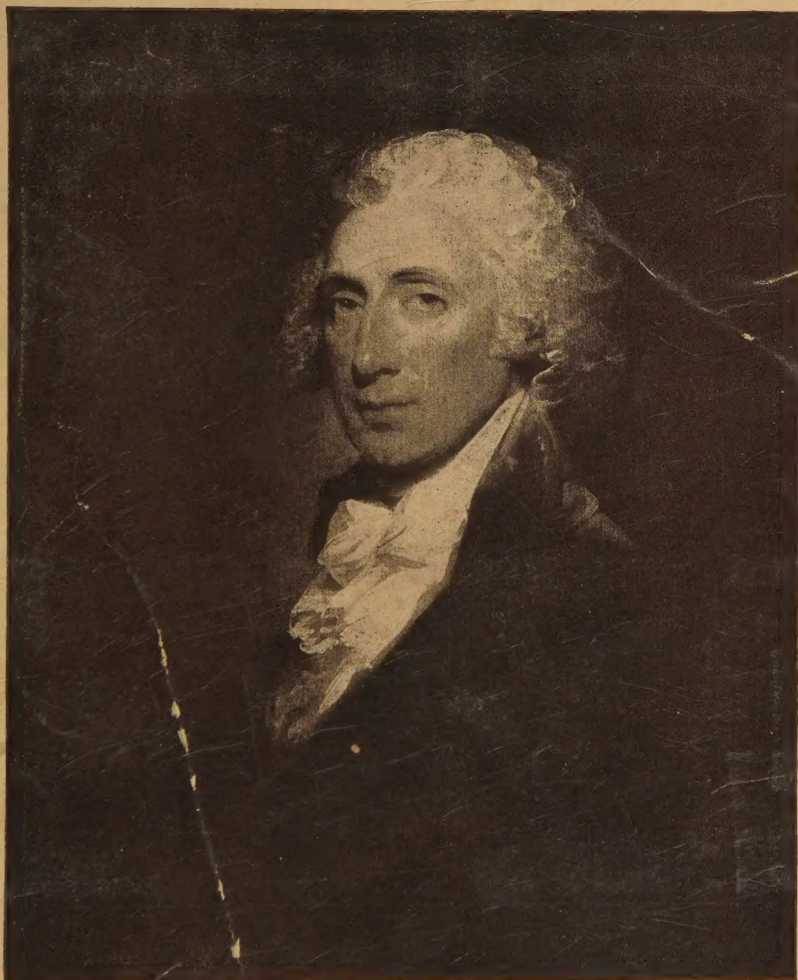


*The Romance of Washington's Aide
and Young Abigail Adams*



**COLONEL
WILLIAM SMITH
AND LADY**

By Katharine Metcalf Roof

COLONEL
WILLIAM SMITH
AND LADY

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'Colonel Smith and Lady.' It is thus you will find them set down in George Washington's diary as dinner guests. Colonel Smith, aide to George Washington, was one of the most gallant soldiers of our Revolution. At the close of the war, he became Secretary of the American Legation in London, and there met and married young Abigail Adams, daughter of John Adams and a lovely figure at the courts of France and England.

In this delightful account of their lives are unpublished letters from Jefferson, Washington, Lafayette, and the Adamses. It is hard to imagine a more sprightly picture of the famous Adams family and of life on both continents during these early years of the republic.

Illustrated

To

Mr. J. L. Russell
with the hope that he will enjoy
a little lighter reading in his
moments of relaxation -
The Lewis Family

Xmas 1929

20⁰⁰

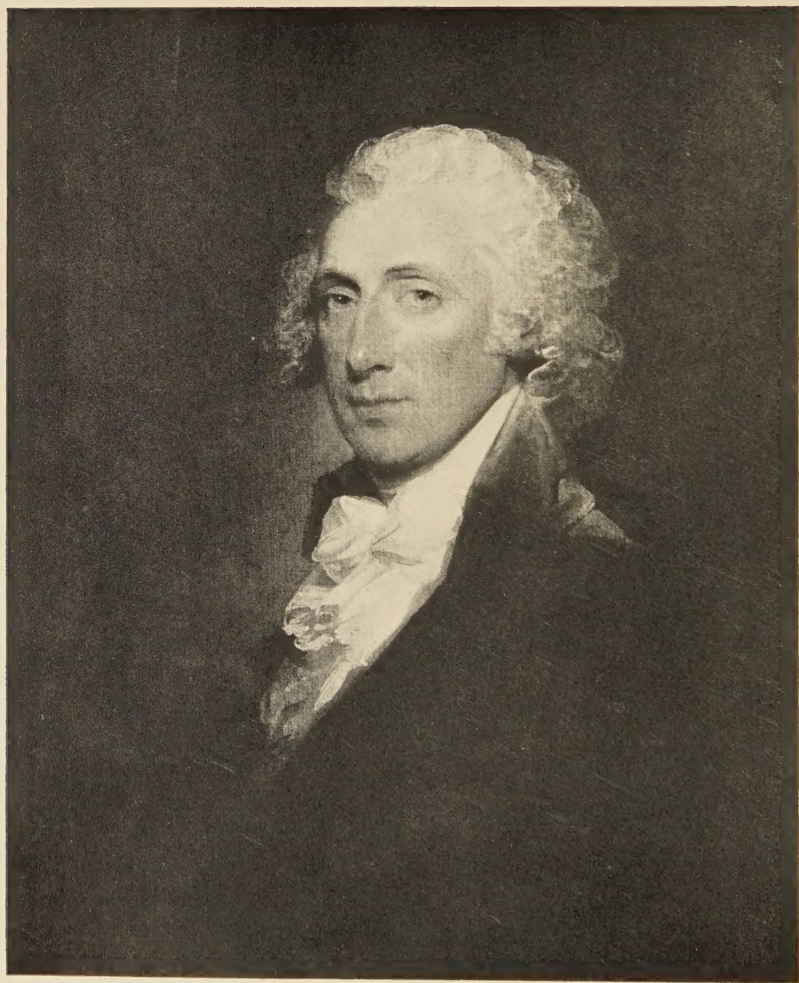
Colonel William Smith *and* Lady

The Romance of

WASHINGTON'S AIDE and Young ABIGAIL ADAMS



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COLONEL WILLIAM STEPHENS SMITH

From the portrait by Gilbert Stuart painted in New York about 1794

Colonel William Smith *and* Lady

The *Romance* of WASHINGTON'S AIDE
and Young ABIGAIL ADAMS

By
KATHARINE METCALF ROOF

"Colo. Smith and Lady . . . dined here to-day."
Washington's Diary

With Illustrations

BOSTON

Printed by *The Riverside Press* for HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
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To

MRS. CHARLES LAWRENCE RIKER

Also one of the Colonel's Friends

FOREWORD

IN William Stephens Smith, one-time aide to Washington, we come upon one of the many heroic young figures of the Revolution forgotten by history who yet did their brave best for liberty. 'One of the most gallant and skillful officers of the Revolution,' John Adams called him; a man of high gifts and great qualities, of an imperishable personal charm.

Abigail Adams Smith, his lady, daughter of John and Abigail Adams, lived only in the hearts and memories of the many who loved her for her beauty, her loyalty, her sensitive loveliness of character. Ephemeral tribute — yes. Yet what woman for its possession would not gladly barter any *post-mortem* tribute in the halls of Fame!

Their story lies buried in many letters — unpublished letters in the possession of their great-grandson from John, Abigail, and John Quincy Adams, from Jefferson and Lafayette; in the Washington Manuscripts; in the unpublished letters of Colonel Smith buried in manuscript collections far and wide. Piecing them together, the story emerges, a lovely if occasionally imperfect mosaic.

John and Abigail Adams are not forgotten, for they belonged, both, to that day when strong hands were carving the Goddess of Liberty from the granite of a new land. Quaint, sterling, invincible John Adams! Between sentimentalizations and abuse have we yet realized the man as he was — his little faults, his great qualities, his pungent humor, his lovable absurdities. A Roman matron they used to call John Adams's Abigail. Her courage and her devotion were classic, but her wit, her humanity were of all time. Was she not, most of all, the incarnate soul of New England at its finest and best?

If these figures from a more heroic past live again, however briefly, in these pages, the old letters and dusty volumes will not have been read in vain.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE author is indebted to Mr. Heyliger A. De Windt, great-grandson of Abigail Adams and Colonel William Smith, for the use of the unpublished letters in his possession from John and Abigail Adams, John Quincy Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Lafayette.

To one of the descendants of John Quincy Adams for reproductions of portraits and data.

To Miss Abigail Louisa Lynch, great-granddaughter of Charles Adams and Sally Smith, for reproductions of family portraits, and for interesting data about the Smith family.

To Mr. Herbert L. Pratt and Yale University for permission to reproduce the two Gilbert Stuart portraits of Colonel Smith.

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Colonel William Smith *and* Lady

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PART I

FROM COLONY TO COUNTRY

AMERICA, 1764-1784

Colonel William Smith *and Lady*

CHAPTER I

THE LIVING PAST

OLD letters! How uncannily alive they are — actual living entities! We may read unmoved the tale of heroism and achievement, then, suddenly, unaware one day, contact the little electric wire of life unfolding the fragile page of some old letter — simple homely annals set down by a once loved hand now dust.

Strange, that vivid sense of personality in letters! The intimate communications of Thomas Jefferson, William Smith, Mrs. John Adams, are full of it. Like the warm touch of a hand, Life leaps out at us from the crumbling page.

‘The dead live when we remember them’ . . . which is perhaps to say that we become suddenly, sharply aware of the inextinguishable survival of life, the essential soul of man, through the vital quality of what he once wrote to one beloved.

In this day of rampant individualism it is rather tragic to realize how completely the great figures of the birth of our Republic sank self in a Cause — the great cause of the founding of a State built upon a conception of justice for all. They built for posterity — and posterity gives them scant thanks, scarcely awareness that once those great hearts were stifled in a greater service.

Yes, it was the age of heroic utterance: Nathan Hale, who regretted ‘that he had but one life to give for his country’; Joseph Reed who, to the British offer of ten thousand pounds for his services, replied: ‘I am not worth purchasing, but such as I am, the King of England is not rich enough to buy me.’ Yet, not because it was the age of rhetoric and gesture were such things

things said. It was an hour in which great hearts attuned to a great ideal *beat to the rate of vibration of the universe*; and out of the fullness of the heart they spoke. They died for their country, and, what was often harder, lived for it.

When Abigail Smith, very much against the wishes of her parents, married a certain obscure young lawyer named John Adams, and in the course of time became the mother of a second Abigail Adams, who, to the entire satisfaction of *her* family circle, married a captivating Revolutionary officer named Smith, an acute case of mixed identities arose to confuse posterity. Small wonder that young American history librarians, with amused patronage, inform the applicant for news about Abigail Adams Smith, that the lady she *really* wants is Abigail Smith Adams.

Abigail Amelia Adams was the first child and only surviving daughter of John and Abigail Adams. At this day a few here and there know of her existence. The reader of old letters may come upon the fragile figure, gracious, wistful, always, one feels, a little thrown into the background by the vivid electric personalities of mother and husband. Yet how delicate the quality of her charm, imprisoned like a perfume between the pages of her girlish journal and her letters.

That journal — all eighteenth-century young ladies kept one — and a miscellaneous (very much so) collection of letters, in which the emotions of 1841 precede and elbow the heroics of 1776, was modestly put forth by Caroline Amelia De Windt in a small edition ('for grandmother's friends') almost ninety years ago.

Dear Caroline — so they always called her, she was very much beloved — was Abigail Adams Smith's only daughter. It was she who selected the letters — with true mid-nineteenth-century delicacy eliding many of the interesting intimate confidences! We are not so ladylike to-day. But we must not criticize Caroline's informal arrangements; she has preserved for us the record of a brave soldier — her father. And if her record, like the chronology of the letters, follows a somewhat zigzag course, the incidents themselves, taken from old journals, are true. Caroline's father was very dear to her. 'Admirable as was his character in every relation of life, in the
parental

parental it was perfection,' she wrote toward the end of her life.

Let us begin with a prenatal glance at the recollections of John Adams:

'On the 25th of October, 1764 — I was married to Miss Smith, second daughter of the Rev. William Smith of Weymouth . . . a connection which has been the source of all my felicity, although a sense of duty which forced me away from her and my children for so many years produced all the griefs of my heart, and all that I esteem real afflictions in life.'

The preceding year Mary Smith, Abigail's older sister, had married one Richard Cranch, evidently with complete parental approval, for the parson-father preached their wedding sermon from the text, 'And Mary hath chosen a good part which shall not be taken from her.' For some reason Father and Mother Smith did not approve of the young man named Adams. But Abigail, who always knew what she wanted, not only saw to it that she married her John, but chose the text for her own marriage sermon, a long-lived reprimand to undiscerning parents! 'John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, yet ye say that he hath a devil.'

The next year little Abigail Amelia Adams¹ — our little Abigail — was born on July 14, 1765.

On November 8, 1755, exactly ten years earlier, William Stephens Smith, the oldest of the ten children of John and Margaret Smith, had appeared upon the scene. His father was a prosperous New York merchant; his mother, the daughter of a British officer, was a beauty and a Tory — most of Long Island was Tory in those days; but the father was a descendant of the earliest English settlers, with, on his mother's side — also like most of Long Island — a touch of Dutch blood.

When 'Nabby' Adams was in her cradle — that unpretentious little wooden cradle, made by the village carpenter, that still stands in the Brooks Adams house at Quincy, young William Smith was attending service in the old Presbyterian Church in Wall Street. But it was a care-free home, the Smiths', in spite of Mr. Calvin.

Until Nabby was nine the Adams family were together, in Braintree or Boston, a widening circle, Nabby, Johnny, Charly, Tommy.

¹ The second name was added at a later period.

Tommy. Then the Great Cause brought the first of the long and grievous separations which has left posterity the letters.

Before the crisis was foreseen, we find John, the nation-builder, impatient of the interferences of little incidents like the repeal of the Stamp Act — another evidence that history is sometimes more thrilling in retrospect than in the making.

'A duller day than last Monday when the province was in a rapture for the repeal of the stamp act' (no capitals then) 'I do not remember to have passed. My wife who had long depended on going to Boston, and my little babe were both very ill of an whooping cough. Myself under obligation to attend the superior court at Plymouth the next day. . . .'

Not long after we read that in company with 'his wife he set off for Salem, dined at Malden at the sign of the Rising Eagle' (was the name a coincidence?) 'where he fell in with Mr. Kent and Mr. Sewall, oated at Martins,' where he chanced upon 'the new sheriff, Mr. Saltonstall'; that they all rode into town together, 'arrived at my dear brother Cranch's about eight . . . drank tea, sat and heard the ladies talk about ribbon, catgut and Paris net, riding-hoods, cloth, silk and lace . . . a very happy evening we had.'

But the day set by Fate for the Boston Tea Party drew near.

In 1773, Abigail writes to Mercy Warren that 'The tea, that baneful weed, is arrived. Great and, I hope, effectual opposition has been made to the landing of it. Such is the present state of affairs . . . that my heart beats at every whistle I hear, and I dare not express half my fears.'

Mrs. Warren's reaction to the Boston Tea Party was poetic, with a quaintly classic charm, contemporaneously flattering to Mr. Dryden. 'India's Poisonous Weed,' she calls it,

'Long since a sacrifice to Thetis made,
A rich regale. Now all the watery dames'
(the sea nymphs, presumably enjoying the infusion in Boston Harbor)
'May snuff souchong, and sip, in flowing bowls,
The higher flavored choice Hysonian stream,
And leave their nectar to old Homer's gods.'

June 17th a great meeting was held at Faneuil Hall with John Adams, strong in righteous repudiation, rising to protest against the iniquitous Boston Port Bill. Soon afterwards he
moved

Philadelphia Sept. 19. 1776

My dear Child

I have received your pretty Letter, and it has given me a great deal of Pleasure, both as it is a Token of your Duty and affection to me and as it is a Proof of your Improvement in your hand Writing and in the faculties of the Mind. - I am very Sorry to hear of your Grand Mamma's Indisposition: but I hope soon to hear of her Recovery. present my Love to your Mamma, and to your Brothers, Johnny, Gherard and Tommy. - Tell them they must be good children and mind their Books, and listen to the Advice of their excellent Mamma, whose Instructions will do them good as long as they live, and after they shall be no more in this World -

Tell them, they must all strive to qualify themselves to be good and useful Men - that so they may be Blessings to their Parents, and to Mankind, as well as qualified to be Blessings to those who shall come after them.

Remember me to Mr Brashett, and Popland, and to Patsy, Tills, Molly, Marsh, Jonathan, Robt and Patsy Garton -

I am my dear little Nabby, with continual Prayers for your Happiness and Prosperity, your affectionate Father
John Adams

LETTER FROM JOHN ADAMS TO HIS DAUGHTER NABBY AGED NINE
WRITTEN WHILE HE WAS ATTENDING THE FIRST CONTINENTAL
CONGRESS AT PHILADELPHIA

moved his little family from Boston to Braintree, 'To prepare myself as well as I could for the storm that was coming.' On August 10th with the other commissioners he took coach for Philadelphia, from whence he writes to his Abigail, his 'Portia,' as she called herself, entertaining accounts of his journey, not forgetting to include: 'my tender love to little Abby. Tell her she must write me a little letter and enclose it in the next one you send. . . . The education of my children is never out of my mind . . . it is time, my dear, for you to begin to teach them French.'

Again, September 18th, 'Thank dear Nabby for her letter, tell her it has given me great spirit.' The following day he picks up his pen to write to her directly.

'PHILADELPHIA, *Sept. 19, 1774*

'MY DEAR CHILD:

'I have received your pretty Letter, and it has given me a great deal of Pleasure, both as it is a Token of your Duty and affection to me and as it is a Proof of your Improvement in your hand Writing and in the faculties of the Mind. I am very sorry to hear of your Grand Mamma's Indisposition: but I hope soon to hear of her Recovery. Present my Love to your Mamma, and to your Brothers, Johnny, Charly and Tommy. Tell them they must be good Children and mind their Books, and listen to the Advice of their excellent Mamma, whose Instructions will do them good as long as they live, and after they shall be no more in this World. . . .

'Remember me to Mr. Brackett, and Copeland, and to Patty Field, Molly Marsh, Jonathan Bass and Patty Curtis. I am, my dear little Nabby, with continual Prayers for your Happiness and Prosperity.

'Your affectionate Father

'JOHN ADAMS

'To MISS NABBY ADAMS, Braintree.

'To be left Mr. Cranch's in Hanover Street.

'Pappa, *Sept. 19th 1774.*'

September, 1774! Day of private meetings to which men brought any news that came to them of the great unrest. A man would rise up and say, 'John Adams writes that we must furnish

nish ourselves with artillery, arms and ammunition but' (preparedness) 'avoid war if possible'... But here he is just 'Pappa' writing to nine-year-old Nabby, a letter to be left at Uncle Cranch's about the 'Faculties of the Mind,' his dear love shining through each quaint moral injunction.

1774: While nine-year-old Nabby was 'improving in Hand-writing and the Faculties of the Mind,' a certain intriguing young man in cue and ruffled shirt front, Mr. William Stephens Smith, was accepting a bit of parchment from Princeton. He took a little glance at the law in the office of one Samuel Jones, of New York, but battle was in the air, and young William was a born soldier. Yet his home was a house divided against itself, for his grandfather Stephens had died in the British service, and his grandmother Stephens was receiving a pension from the British Government.

'At the beginning of the Revolution,' Caroline tells us, 'a Majors' commission and restoration of the family estates' were offered to William Stephens Smith if he would enter His Majesty's service. For it seemed that General Howe had committed 'depredations' upon the Long Island estate of Mr. John Smith, who was far from being a Tory.

The mother begged the son to accept, while the father 'walked the room, deeply agitated.' But when she had finished her 'appeal,' William answered, 'If it is your wish, madam, it shall be done, but from this hour all intercourse between us is cut off forever!'

'I knew how my boy would decide!' exclaimed the father.

Thus William Smith volunteered in the Revolutionary Army in which he was soon to play a brave and picturesque part.

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH MRS. JOHN ADAMS'S PEWTER SPOONS AND MRS. SAM QUINCY'S MAHOGANY TABLE BECOME PROPERTIES OF THE REVOLUTION

ON October 28th, Mr. Adams turned his face homeward. His diary reads like an outburst of contemporaneous emotion at the enjoyment of pre-war hospitality:

'Took our departure in a very great rain from the happy, the peaceful, the elegant, the hospitable and polite city of Philadelphia. It is not very likely that I shall ever see this part of the world again' (this time the nation-builder was not a Prophet), 'but I shall ever retain a most grateful, pleasing sense of the many civilities I have received in it.'

That winter John Adams spent at home, writing weekly letters signed 'Novanglus' for the 'Boston Gazette,' being elected into the Provincial Congress, and keeping a parental eye upon the 'Faculties of the Mind.' It must sometimes have been a wandering eye, for stirring events had begun to take place in the near neighborhood of little Nabby. A certain talented designer of silver teapots took a brisk ride one night, because eight hundred British regulars had been seen unobtrusively crossing the river from Boston to East Cambridge. As a result, when Major Pitcairn passed through Lexington in the early morning of April 19, 1775, he found a goodly collection of militia waiting for him on the Green. We all know about the Minute Men at Concord with brave Captain Davis at their head — 'Not a man afraid to go' — how at the bridge a British musket fired, and Davis fell dead: how Major Buttrick cried, 'Fire, for God's sake, fire!' Yes, it was a shot that rang around the world.

The day after the battle the Minute Men called for Mrs. Adams's pewter spoons to melt them into bullets — John Quincy remembered that. A few days later, Mr. Adams 'got into a sulky attended by a servant on horseback,' on his way to Philadelphia, the elegant, the hospitable, the polite.

But anxious days now. Small heart for elegance and hospitality.

ity. The war had begun in earnest. 'In case of real danger,' he writes Abigail, 'fly to the woods with our children. . . .'

'For twelve months,' John Quincy Adams wrote afterwards, 'my mother and her infant children dwelt liable every hour of the day or night to be butchered in cold blood or taken into Boston as hostages.'

The following month Ethan Allen with a tiny force captured Fort Ticonderoga. The Committee of Safety sent out appeals for troops, and fifteen thousand men answered. (How many were there all told, in the little colony?)

On June 17th, John Adams writes to his wife that 'Congress has made choice of the modest and virtuous, the amiable, generous and brave George Washington, Esquire, to be General of the American Army . . .'

And even while he wrote, the guns were firing on Bunker Hill, and Abigail and seven-year-old Johnny had climbed Penn's Hill to watch Charlestown go up in smoke, to the accompaniment of beating drums and the shots that stilled so many strong hearts, General Warren's among them. Brave, weary colonists, fighting for so much more than their own lives and those of their children — behind a few shovels of earth thrown up in the night, behind little pitiful shields of new-mown hay. Without food, without water, with small ammunition — the battle was won.

'I would not have you distressed about me,' Abigail on the edge of the battle-field, writes to her absent husband.

A few days later she meets Washington and recalls Mr. Dryden's poetry:

'. . . He's a temple
Sacred by birth and built by hands divine,
His soul's the deity that lodges there
Nor is the pile unworthy of the god.'

General Lee, on the contrary 'looks like a careless, hardy veteran . . . the elegance of his pen far exceeds that of his person. . . .' It can happen to-day.

Patriotism will not permit Abigail to use leather, so she begs that 'Bass will get two yards of black calamanco for shoes . . . I cannot wear leather if I go barefoot. A thousand pins too, if a
friend

friend is traveling this way.' Food was scarce and very dear. But not once does she weaken, a young mother alone with four children within the sound of the enemy's guns.

Meantime, General Burgoyne is a self-invited guest in Mrs. Sam Quincy's house, and 'A lady who lived opposite' . . . saw (horrid sight!) 'raw meat cut and hacked upon her mahogany tables, and her superb damask curtains and cushions exposed to the rain.'

And such a charming gentleman, General Johnny Burgoyne, author of 'Maid of the Oaks' and 'Bon Ton' which had such a run in the playhouses in London! What a pity there were no odd moments in which to jot down passages of that new comedy 'The Heiress' — so much less harmful to Mrs. Sam Quincy's mahogany table.

Things went from bad to worse with the ever-increasing scarcity of food and the mounting prices. One by one the little family sickened. 'Our household is a hospital in every part,' Abigail writes. 'Our little Tommy lies very ill.'

There were deaths in that brave household, but happily not little Tommy's. In October we find Nabby receiving a most adult letter of condolence from 'Pappa' in Philadelphia, for poor Grandmamma did not recover from that 'indisposition.'

'I condole with you, most sincerely, for the loss of your most worthy grandmamma. I know you must be afflicted at this severe stroke.

'Now you have lost so valuable an ancestor, I hope you will be more attentive than ever to the instructions and examples of your mamma and your aunts.'

To Abby at ten the disappearance from the domestic scene of the 'valuable ancestor' may not have spelled tragedy, but to Abigail, the mother, the loss seemed almost unbearable. 'Have pity on me, oh, thou my beloved,' she writes to her far-away John, 'for the hand of God presseth me sore.'

'I will never,' he replies to the letter, 'come here again without you. . . . We will bring Master Johnny with us. You and he shall have the smallpox here, and we will be as happy as Mr. Hancock and his lady.'

Fine and sound New England apple, ever mingling the pun-
gency

gency of humor and courage, rather than sentimentality, with the deepest emotions of the heart!

March, 1776, and Boston evacuated by the British. General Washington the modest, amiable, and brave, had done his work well. General Howe tactfully withdrew to Brooklyn. 'Pappa,' who had been visiting at home awhile is off again. From Philadelphia, where he is busy 'ushering in a fine boy,' as he called the Declaration of Independence, he writes to his eldest, now eleven, and exhibiting a taste for studies 'scarcely reputable':

'April 18th, 1776

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

'I cannot recollect the tenderness and dutiful affection you expressed for me just before my departure without the most sensible emotion. . . . It was a proof of an amiable disposition, and a tender feeling heart. . . .

'I learned in a letter from your mamma, that you was learning the accidence. This will do you no hurt, my dear, though you must not tell many people of it, for it is scarcely reputable for young ladies to understand Latin and Greek. French, my dear, French is the language, next to English. This I hope your mamma will teach you. I long to come home, but I believe it will be a great while, perhaps not before next Christmas.'

While Abby is doubtless dutifully concealing her sinful progress in Latin and Greek from a ladylike world, Abigail senior — advanced and intrepid spirit — is giving feminist counsel to her husband:

'And by the way in the new code of laws I desire you to remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors were. Remember all husbands would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention are not paid to the ladies we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.'

If not permitted to advise Congress on the subject of Women's Rights Abigail Adams did supervise the education of her own children. Johnny went to Mr. Thatcher's school, but Nabby, Charly, and Tommy were taught at home by their mother.

mother. John Adams, busy with the new ship of State, writes as father and statesman to his Abigail:

'What will come of this labor time will discover. . . . I believe my children will think I ought to have thought a little for them. But I will not bear the reproaches of my children. I will tell them that I labored to procure a free constitution of government for them . . . and if they do not prefer this ample fortune to ease and elegance, they are not my children, and I care not what becomes of them . . . John has genius, so has Charles. Cultivate their minds . . . inspire their little hearts . . . Make them great and manly. . . . Abby and Tommy are not forgotten by me. The first by reason of her sex [not yet, oh, John, a feminist] requires a different education. . . . Of this you are the best judge.' One feels a little catch at the heart reading the next lines: 'I want to send each of my pretty little flock some present. I have walked this city over twenty times, and gaped at every shop like a countryman to find something, but could not. Ask every one of them what they would choose to have, and write it to me in your next letter.'

We picture John Adams refining phrases in the immortal document, fighting for posterity in Paris, but who has thought of him, dignified pigtail and ruffled shirt front, staring into Philadelphia shop windows trying to decide which intriguing object would make happiest his 'pretty little flock'!

'I have some thought,' he writes, 'of petitioning the General Court for leave to bring my family here. I am a lonely, forlorn creature. . . . I want to take a walk with you in the garden, Tom in one hand and Charles in the other, Abby, on your right hand, and John upon your left, to view the cornfields, the orchards.'

But homesick Mr. Adams found himself obliged to view other things than cornfields and orchards. July 2, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was determined upon by Congress, to be ratified two days later. On July 4th, Abigail writes the absent one that 'after hearing a very good sermon' she went with the multitude into King Street to hear the Proclamation of Independence read . . . a great shout went up — 'God save the American States!' amidst the firing of guns, ringing of bells, and cheers of the multitude. Mr. Bowdoin contributed 'a
sentiment,'

sentiment,' and the King's Arms were taken down from the State House forever.

Five days later, New York formally adopted the Declaration and celebrated it by tearing down the leaden statue of George III on Bowling Green and casting him into bullets. Was it some old Dutchman with a tradition of 1664 and a sense of humor who had that practical and picturesque thought?

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH YOUNG MAJOR SMITH HELPS TO SPOIL A HESSIAN CHRISTMAS

OCTOBER, 1776, to January, 1777, John Adams was at home in Braintree. We picture little Abby that winter busily netting, knitting, sewing and making samplers, perhaps with more emphasis upon the sewing and knitting, for it was the day of necessities. Abby and John Quincy grew up in one of the great epochs of history, and children matured swiftly in that intensive atmosphere.

John Quincy rode alone on horseback into Boston, carrying and bringing mail and dispatches, soldier's work — a little boy of nine.

One night that winter — it must have been early in the New Year — John Adams tore open the sealed packet brought by little Johnny and read the contents aloud to his family. News? Yes, . . . General Washington had crossed the Delaware above Trenton amid snow, storm, and ice, surprising the enemies' camp and making a thousand Hessians prisoners. I wonder if little Abby, listening with wide eyes, caught the name of the gallant young officer who, heart aflame, snatched the Hessian captain from his horse and won a lieutenant-colonelcy from General Washington? As the novelists used to say, it was none other than young William Stephens Smith.

And what had young William been doing between the day when he flew in the face of Tory-infested Long Island and volunteered in the Continental Army, and that day-after-Christmas when he was so unceremonious with the Hessian captain?

It was in August, 1776 — we have the date from Washington's letter — that he was appointed aide to General Sullivan, with the rank of Major. He was with brave General Sullivan in that disastrous battle of Long Island, when both Sullivan and Stirling were taken prisoners, but managed to escape and get himself within Washington's lines. He was with Washington in
that

that masterly retreat when the General collected 'every sloop, yacht, fishing smack, yawl, scow, or row-boat from the Battery to Kings Bridge or Hell Gate.' These exceedingly various craft were assembled at the Brooklyn Ferry and manned by the fishermen of Gloucester and Marblehead. All night long the troops were ferried across the river under the very nose of Howe's army to the New York side.

Washington was the last one to leave Brooklyn, and young Major Smith was with him in that boat.

On that disastrous September 15th, when Washington's soldiers, seized with panic, fled; and Howe's army took possession of New York, Major Smith was one who did not flee. What he did was to bring the garrison down the treacherous current of the East River from the fort commanding Hell Gate, under heavy and incessant fire from the British on the opposite shore. In the subsequent action on Harlem Heights (the day after General Howe's dinner party with Mrs. Lindley Murray), young Smith, serving as General Greene's aide, was in the thick of that engagement, in which you remember the British were repulsed; was wounded and fell from his horse. That might have been the end had not Colonel Carey and Lieutenant Webb picked him up and carried him from the field.

But when, about a month later, General Howe moved up the Sound to Throgg's Neck, hoping to surprise Washington in the rear and cut him off from his base in Connecticut, young William, though still unhealed of his grievous wound and forbidden to move by Dr. Bailey, rose from his couch, and with a corporal and six men cut away the bridge connecting the point with the mainland. A very pretty and valuable maneuver.

Exhilarated by destruction of the bridge over which General Howe had hoped to pass, instead of returning to his bed young Major Smith galloped away to join Washington at White Plains, where he did some efficient work by night in destroying most of the forage in the vicinity, and remained with Washington during the forced retreat through New Jersey. On December 13th the disingenuous General Lee was captured by the British.

Dread days these, Philadelphia in a panic, hiding valuables, General Howe tempting the discouraged colonists with offers of protection



THE CAPTURE OF THE HESSIANS, BY JOHN TRUMBULL

Colonel Smith, center left, supports Colonel Rahl, the wounded commander of the Hessians

protection to all who would take the oath of allegiance to the British Crown.

'At this moment,' John Fiske says, 'the whole future of America and of all that America signifies to the world, rested upon that single Titanic will — Washington's.' In that black hour, in the bitter cold — three men were frozen on the march — he led his army back across the Delaware to attack their victorious enemy; in little boats, through the dreadful jam of ice, with the fishermen of Marblehead still at the oars, led them to victory — on Christmas night!

One realizes how much the army was still in the impromptu stage from a letter of Washington's to Colonel Smith dated Morristown, January 14, 1777. 'As soon as Col. Kirkbride takes your post I desire you will immediately march with the men at present under your command, and as many others as you can collect, to Basking Ridge where you will meet Gen'l Dickinson with the militia of the State.'

Later in 1777, Major Smith — no, Lieutenant-Colonel since the episode of the Hessian captain — was sent by Washington under a flag of truce with dispatches and money for the negligible General Lee in captivity at New Brunswick, afterwards returning to the fighting line under General Putnam.

The end of the Hessian soldiers has a touch of the comic supplement. Paid mercenaries, their higher sentiments cannot have been greatly involved. A shrewd idea for their disposal was hatched under some Congressional wig, and found corroborative favor under others. Result, a printed manifesto was neatly folded inside the packages of tobacco bought by the soldiers, promising each Hessian who would leave the British service a little gift of real estate. The prize seems to have been received with acclamation by most of the openers of the packets. One wonders if William Smith's Hessian got one of them.

CHAPTER IV

PHILADELPHIA TAKES GENERAL HOWE

SOON after the momentous dispatch that Johnny brought home, John Adams again rode away to Philadelphia, once more the statesman, the law-giver, fighting the cause with the spiritual sword. On the way he wrote back to Braintree:

'Present my affection in the tenderest manner to my little deserving daughter and my amiable sons. It was cruel parting this morning. My heart was most deeply affected although I had the presence of mind to appear composed. May God Almighty protect you, my dear, and all our little ones.'

Some days later, we find him at Fishkill, 'after a march like that of Hannibal over the Alps,' indebted to 'a private gentleman,' Colonel Brinckerhoff, for hospitality; then after a détour 'up the Albany Road, because there was too much ice in Hudson's River to cross in ferryboats,' he discovers Poughkeepsie, 'like Fishkill, a pretty village. We are almost wholly among the Dutch, zealous against the Tories.'

Eventually Pappa reaches Philadelphia, and, though immersed in very grave matters, takes time for an educational outing which he retails in his next letter to his little deserving daughter. 'The Understanding,' it seems, was expected to 'open' at the ripe age of eleven:

'PHILADELPHIA, *March 17th, 1777*

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

'I hope, by this time, you can write an handsome hand; but I wish you would, now and then, send a specimen of it to Philadelphia to your pappa, that he may have the pleasure of observing the proficiency you make, not only in your handwriting, but in your turn of thinking, and in your faculty of expressing your thoughts.

'You have discovered in your childhood a remarkable modesty, discretion, and reserve. . . . You are now, I think, far advanced

vanced in your twelfth year; a time when the understanding generally opens,'—

And so Mr. Adams describes, with great wealth of detail, 'a remarkable Institution for the education of young ladies,' evidently of German ancestry, 'in the town of Bethlehem in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania . . . one hundred and twenty beds, in two long rows, with a ventilator, about the middle of the ceiling, to make a circulation of air . . . the beds and bed-clothes all of excellent quality and extremely neat. How should you like to live in such a nunnery? I wish you had an opportunity to see and learn the various needle work and other manufactures, in flax, cotton, silk, silver, and gold, which are carried on there. But I would not wish you to live there,' adds the Spartan Puritan father, 'The young misses keep themselves too warm with Dutch stoves, and they take too little exercise and fresh air to be healthy. Remember me with the tenderest affection to your mamma and your brothers. I am with inexpressible affection.

'Your father

'JOHN ADAMS'

All this time at home, Abigail must be the resourceful, domestic commissariat. Some of the prices make those of to-day seem like Christmas presents . . . 'Mutton, none; lamb, none; pork, none; cotton wool, none; mean sugar, four pounds per hundred; molasses, none; New England rum' (class of necessities) 'eight shillings per gallon; cider, forty dollars the barrel; linen, twenty dollars a yard; coffee, two and six pence the pound; chocolate, three shillings.' And Abigail was one of the gallant ladies who made a little midnight call upon a certain profiteering coffee merchant who would not sell his coffee for less than six shillings the pound, 'seized him by the neck and tossed him into a cart,' made him unlock his warehouse and disgorge his coffee.

'You have made me merry,' John replies, 'with the female frolic with the miser,' it seems the women in Boston begin to think themselves able to serve their country. I believe the two Howes have not very great women for wives. If they had, we
should

should suffer from their exertions more than we do. . . . A smart wife would have put Howe in possession of Philadelphia a long time ago. . . .’ There is something almost immortal in that sentence.

In his next Pappa tells Abby a little bedtime story of the first Independence Day celebration in the city that gave it birth. He regrets that ‘The thought of taking any notice of this day, was not conceived until it was too late to have a sermon,’ but ‘Congress determined to adjourn over that day and to dine together’ — which must have been on the whole more exhilarating. After an impromptu naval demonstration the guests were ‘very agreeably entertained with excellent company, fine music from the band of Hessians taken at Trenton’ (a great appetizer that thought, calculated to convert the tone-deaf into a music-lover!) ‘and continual volleys between every toast from a company of soldiers drawn up in Second Street before the City Tavern, where we dined.’ Not a quiet party!

‘. . . In the evening I was walking about the streets for a little fresh air and exercise, and was surprised to find the whole city lighting up their candles at the windows’ — a pretty German custom with which the New-Englander was not familiar.

‘Had General Howe been here in disguise, or his master, this show would have given them heartache.’

A little more than a month later, Washington entered Philadelphia. ‘They marched twelve deep and took two hours in passing,’ he writes to his Abigail. How the loyal heart must have beat to the measures of those marching feet! Beside Washington rode a young French nobleman, a mere lad of nineteen, who had left his young wife to draw his sword in defense of the far-away republic, Marquis de Lafayette. Not a showy army, God keep their memories! Boots worn through, clothes in rags and patches — the glory was in their hearts.

Alas, a short-lived hopefulness. Another month brought the battle of Brandywine, and on September 26th the British entered Philadelphia.

Patriotically disheartening, but not so important strategically. When Benjamin Franklin heard that Howe had taken Philadelphia, he observed that it would be more correct to say that Philadelphia had taken Howe.

In

In that battle of Brandywine, a certain Adjutant-General, named Timothy Pickering, took part. Something about him caused shrewd Alexander Hamilton to advise Washington that Pickering would bear watching. Perhaps it was at that time that his jealousy of the gallant youth, ten years his junior, was first kindled. Colonel Smith was the kind of officer whose pride it was instantly to obey orders. But we find Washington writing twice to Pickering that he 'must again request' him to carry out instructions. That same month, answering Lafayette's praise of his fellow-comrade, he says, 'You know my opinion of and value for Smith.' We also find Smith transmitting Washington's orders to Mr. Pickering crisply, 'to alter the route of the Express riders' who are to 'pass from the Bowling Green to Todd's Bridge and cross at the Ruffin's Ferry,' concluding, not Mr. Pickering's 'humble and obedient serv'nt,' but just, 'Yours &' 'W. S. Smith.' We may be sure that Mr. Pickering's pale eye took note of that 'Yours &.' Unfortunately for William Smith, Timothy Pickering lived to become a dangerous enemy. That he was never able entirely to eclipse the joy of that light spirit was due not to any lack of a singularly energetic malignity, but to the non-eclipsible quality of the Colonel.

Franklin had already been sent to France, to treat with the French Government. Another gentleman, who greatly preferred to remain at home, was to go also, but he did not know it yet.

CHAPTER V

IN WHICH LITTLE JOHN QUINCY GOES TO FRANCE

WE left young Lieutenant-Colonel Smith on the banks of 'Hudson's River' with that doughty wolf-slayer, General Putnam, busy helping to cut off Sir Henry Clinton in his attempt to join Burgoyne — that reprehensible dramatist who permitted raw meat to be 'hacked' on Mrs. Sam Quincy's mahogany table. His commander kept an approving eye on him. 'That young Smith is a stiff-backed young man,' he remarked to Steuben, who was teaching Frederick the Great's tactics to the poor soldiers of Valley Forge.

From Lancaster toward the end of that terrible winter the stiff-backed young man writes with his pride and his humility to Washington explaining how he has been delayed on his march by bad weather and worse roads.

'Upon my arrival at the White Horse I shall Wait on Your Excellency for my Orders to proceed to the Advanced Post which I hope your Excellency still intends Honoring me with.' (His Excellency did, it was the post at Gulf Mills.) 'I should be rendered extremely unhappy if I had the least suspicion that your Excellency harbour'd a single Sentiment to my discredit, particularly that of Neglect of Duty, which I hope Your Excellency will never find me Guilty of.'

In November, John Adams obtained leave to visit his family. But he had barely reached home when word came that he was appointed commissioner to France, and that the frigate *Boston* was being made ready to take him there. After four years of almost constant separation, he must now face the chance of capture on the high seas, of imprisonment, of execution. Posterity is a hard master.

He recounts the struggle between heart and conscience. 'My children were growing up without my care in their education, and all my emoluments as a member of Congress for four years had not been sufficient to pay a laboring man on my farm. . . . On the other hand, my country was in deep distress and great danger. . . . My wife did not fail me on this occasion; but she discovered

discovered an inclination to bear me company with all our children.'

Poor heart, so sorely pressed with the long strain of loneliness, the agony of war and waiting. Small wonder she discovered that inclination.

In the end, of course, the wild impulse was abandoned. It was settled that Johnny was to go with his father, a decision that was to make deep impress upon the development of another Adams President.

It was a frightful trip, with hurricanes to add to the perils of war. 'I often regretted that I had brought my son,' John Adams wrote afterwards. But Johnny enjoyed himself immensely. 'My little son is proud of his knowledge of all the sails,' his father set down in the diary that neither hurricanes nor warfare, interrupted.

The British ship *Martha* was captured. Mr. Adams 'happened to be upon the quarter deck' — until the commodore discovered him, and, exclaiming, 'I am commanded by the Continental Congress to carry you in safety to Europe and I will do it,' dragged him from the spot.

Meantime Portia in Boston, inextinguishable fountain of life that she was, dried her eyes, and went to visit the French fleet, newly arrived in Boston Harbor, where she proceeded to entertain some of its officers who, she felt, were being neglected by Boston.

But the letters in that day of sea warfare too often never reached their destination, and one day under the long strain the repression breaks. 'I have not been so parsimonious as my friend,' she writes, 'perhaps I am not so prudent, but I cannot take up my pen with my heart overflowing and not give utterance to some of the abundance which is in it. Could you, after a thousand fears and anxieties, long expectation, painful suspense, be satisfied with my telling you that I was well, that my daughter sent her duty, that I had ordered some articles for you which I hoped would arrive, etc. By Heaven if you could you have changed hearts with some frozen Laplander. But I will restrain a pen already, I fear, too rash, nor shall I tell you how much I have suffered from this appearance of — inattention.'

John Adams answers, very much in despair:

'For

'For Heaven's sake, my dear, don't indulge a thought that it is possible for me to neglect or forget all that is dear to me in this world. . . . It is not safe to write anything that one is not willing should go into all the newspapers in the world. I never know what conveyance is safe . . . notwithstanding all this I have written you not less than fifty letters.'

Mr. Adams was not always official. 'To tell you the truth,' he slyly observes at his first glimpse of the coquettish femininity of France, 'I admire the ladies here. Don't be jealous. They are handsome and very well educated.'

The aid of France, who had formally recognized the Independence of the American States in February, was now promised. Franklin had not failed. Lafayette was followed by d'Estaing, Rochambeau, the Duke de Lauzun-Biron, the Marquis de Chastellux; and, from other lands, Kosciusko, Count Pulaski, and the noble Baron Steuben. Also, dark figure of destiny, one Miranda of Venezuela, a fiery revolutionist.

CHAPTER VI

MONSIEUR LAFAYETTE MAKES A TOAST

SEVENTEEN-SEVENTY-EIGHT: the year that began with Valley Forge, the death of the Earl of Chatham, the treaty between France and America, the cowardly plots against Washington, and the resignation of General Howe, whose sympathies were more than half with the colonists; — grave events with a bizarre *intermezzo* in the form of a farewell party given in honor of General Howe at Philadelphia known as the 'Mischianza,' with Major André and Margaret Shippen among the guests. It was the year of the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British, after which it passed into the disingenuous hands of Benedict Arnold and his associate David Franks; of the battles of Monmouth and Butt's Hill, in which our Colonel distinguished himself, and the capture of Savannah by the enemy.

Seventeen-seventy-eight saw also the horrible massacre and tortures at Wyoming and Cherry Valley, dreadful orgies of cruelty; American soldiers held down on red-hot embers by the savages, sixteen of them arranged in a circle, while an old half-breed hag known as Queen Esther, supposed to be the granddaughter of Frontenac, danced about them shrieking as she slew them one by one; starved women whose children were born, fleeing through a nightmare swamp called the 'Shades of Death' to this day. It was into that savage-infested region that our Colonel went with General Sullivan. We have forgotten what the colonists suffered from the savages in the wars of the Revolution. The brave agriculturists of the Mohawk Valley slept with their muskets beside them and worked with them in reach of their hands.

That winter Washington wrote to Congress that he had '2898 men unfit for duty because they are barefoot and otherwise naked.' . . . At Valley Forge, where the march of the poor soldiers through the snow could be traced by the blood from those bare, frost-bitten feet, while 'hogsheads of shoes, stockings and clothing were lying at different points in the road'; Valley Forge,

Forge, where the officers went wrapped in old quilts and blankets, because their poor uniforms were worn through, where the soldiers worked with half-frozen hands to build rude handcarts to draw their scanty food because they had hardly any horses left.

Back of the agony of Valley Forge lay the mismanagement of Congress — which seems throughout the middle portion of the war to have been the villain of the piece — the usual mishandling and obstruction arising from the inability of the theorist to understand the practical exigencies of the field. Even our trusty John Adams did some extraordinarily ill-advised talking in Congress.

In that black episode of the plots of the envious, incompetent Gates and the treacherous Lee against Washington, Lafayette has bequeathed a moment, exquisitely French, holding an immortal thrill. Too shrewd, though but a boy of twenty, to be deceived by their disloyal machinations, he listened in silence to the treacherous proposals of Gates at that drunken dinner party at York; but at the end he rose as if to make a speech, and with all eyes turned upon him, lifted his glass. 'There is one toast, gentlemen, that in the generous excitement of the moment you have forgotten to drink . . . I beg leave to propose the health of the Commander-in-Chief of the United armies of America.'

Who says that the French gesture, dramatic, incomparable, is but a gesture!

The American army now had the freedom of Philadelphia, and the White Horse Tavern was again a background for the buff and blue. In March his commander had a letter from Colonel Smith:

'May it please your Excellency

'Inclosed I send a letter from Col^o Gibson treating of the officers (attending the British & Hessian Prisoners) being permitted to go into the City. They propose being at the White Horse this evening and would be happy to be made acquainted with your Excellency's Sentiments. I shall do myself the Honour of waiting on your Excellency to Morrow to receive your orders concerning my Men.'

In

In June came the battle of Monmouth, with the thermometer at 96 and numerous deaths from sunstroke. Steuben, Lafayette, Anthony Wayne were there, and William Smith, commended for his services by Washington, although the history books have overlooked him, together with other brave men — there were so many of them. Alas that the glory of Monmouth should be lost through the treachery of Charles Lee when he made, in the words of Washington, 'an unnecessary, disorderly and shameful retreat.'

After the battle of Monmouth, Colonel Smith went to help in the reduction of Newport, then occupied by the British. General Wheaton, of Rhode Island, remembered nearly fifty years afterwards, when William Smith was no more, his 'activity and usefulness, selecting ground for batteries, on picket guard and reconnoitering, and particularly his service on Butts Hill.'

As for that one who was to become his 'Dearest Friend,' her concern at that moment was not with Revolutionary officers or even with the great Revolution itself, but with the Faculties of the Mind. For Abby has now discovered that young John Quincy is a French scholar, and ambition is aflame. Pappa, in the midst of diplomatic conditions far from satisfactory at Passy, finds time to praise — and advise, of course. Good instructive Pappa was not forgetting John Quincy's pleasure either. We read, solemnly recorded in his journal, how he took Johnny and Edmé Genêt's young son Edmond to the menagerie in Paris one Sunday. We wonder if John Adams would have permitted Johnny this dissipation of a New England Sunday! Certainly he never dreamed what a young firebrand he was harboring as guest!

Colonel Smith was with the Sullivan expedition in Wyoming, New York, that year. There he undertook the perilous task of landing provisions by night in the little town besieged and trapped by the savages, and in succeeding, saved the settlement. After that he went northward with General Sullivan through the Indian country inflicting an overwhelming defeat upon the red men at Elmira, destroying their villages and corn — one of the important campaigns of the Revolution.

In June, 1779, John Adams sailed for America, where 'butchers meat now cost a dollar a pound and potatoes ten dollars

dollars a bushel.' In August he reached home, only to be ordered back to France again in November. This time he took not only Johnny but little Charles. His poor Abigail sits down at her desolate table and 'cannot swallow her food.' Another fierce New England winter with Massachusetts Bay frozen over for a month. 'By the mountain of snow that surrounds me I could fancy myself in Greenland. A week ago I parted with my daughter, at the request of our Plymouth friends to spend a month with them, so I am solitary indeed.'

There is a letter from John Adams to his daughter in December, written from Ferrol, Spain, in which Spanish chocolate fills a large part of the picture. Mr. Adams had not intended to go to Spain, but the vessel bound for Bordeaux sprang a leak and was obliged to put in at the nearest port — which was rather nice, on the whole, especially for Mr. Thaxter, who found so much to set down in his journal.

'If I could send you some of the lemons, oranges or water melons of this place it would give me more pleasure than you,' writes Pappa, 'but there are very seldom merchant vessels at this place from America. I have met with few things more remarkable here than the chocolate, which is the finest I ever saw.' And Pappa 'will inquire,' of course, 'what it is that renders it so superior.'

'I see little which would be entertaining to a young lady in this place. There is what they call an Italian opera. I have been once there, but not understanding the Italian language, and seeing very little company and scarcely any ladies, who,' Pappa delightfully confesses, 'are always to me the most pleasing ornaments of such spectacles. I don't think it worth while to go again. But the gentleman, and your brother are going this evening. They may possibly learn a little of the Spanish language, as the piece to-night is to be in that tongue.'

Good Mr. Adams, with praiseworthy restraint, writes only of the pleasant and instructive to his deserving little daughter, but we discover from his diary that the trip was not all water-melons and Spanish chocolate. The servants were 'without exception, dull, inactive and unskilful.' Both Charles and Johnny got sick, and Mr. Thaxter, a most exasperating moony companion, 'shiftless as a child . . . understood no language but English,'

Pine Log March 21st 1781 79

Sir

The Marquis has this instant received an Express advising him of the sailing of the French Squadron from Rhode Island on the eight instant & flatters himself that something may yet be done he therefore requests that every measure that prudence will justify may still be continued to keep Arnold to his post. he also desired me to inform you that troops have sailed from N York for his relief, if upon his further perusing his Letters at Sir Pesters he finds any thing material you may depend upon receiving the earliest intelligence

I remain with great respect

Dr your Obedient

Baron Steuben

Wm L Smith Lt Col

LETTER FROM COLONEL SMITH TO BARON STEUBEN, WRITTEN MARCH 21, 1781, WHILE HE WAS WITH LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA AND STEUBEN WAS OPERATING AGAINST BENEDICT ARNOLD

English,' and 'wouldn't do anything but write in his journal.' Poor oblivious Mr. Thaxter, culling and preserving his impressions like a good Bostonian! Mr. Adams should have been more sympathetic.

Colonel Smith won high praise from Greene and Washington in 1780 for his brave and brilliant action in the battle of Springfield. In 1779 Washington had appointed him Inspector and Adjutant-General of the Light Infantry commanded by Lafayette. He served under General Lafayette until July, 1781, which included the period when Washington sent Lafayette to Virginia to seek Benedict Arnold, now a Brigadier in the British army. March 21, 1781, Colonel Smith wrote to Steuben concerning the projected trapping of the traitor: 'The Marquis has this instant received an Express advising him of the sailing of the french Squadron from Rhode-Island on the eight instant & flatters himself that something may yet be done he therefore requests that every measure that prudence will justify may still be continued to keep Arnold to his post, he also desired me to inform you that troops have sailed from N. York for his relief, if upon his further perusing his Letters at Sir Peatons he finds anything material you may depend upon receiving the earliest intelligence.' But Lafayette did not succeed in capturing Arnold, although he contrived to add considerably to the sorrows of Cornwallis.

May 30, 1781, Washington adds a reassuring postscript to his orders to Colonel Smith, restively ensconced at the City Tavern in Philadelphia: 'The campaign herewith will probably be full as active as that to the Southward.'

A month later there was consolation indeed. July 6th, William Smith awoke to find himself aide to General Washington.

General Wheaton remembered long afterwards how Washington paid 'marked and particular attention to Colonel Smith, often having him share his tent.'

To his comrade Sam Webb — he who with Joseph Reed refused to accept a letter from the British emissary addressed to 'George Washington, Esquire' — the Colonel writes from Williamsburg before Cornwallis, September 23, 1781: 'Fortune courts us with her smiles. Our troops from the Head of Elk are arrived.'

arrived. We shall advance firmly upon his Lordship in a few days with near 20,000 men. He is entrench'd, but it will not save him. If I survive you shall have the particulars.'

Cornwallis was in hot pursuit of Lafayette, determined to demolish him. 'The boy cannot escape me,' he said, but the boy did. Lafayette made an ingenious retreat which evaded conflict. 'I am not strong enough even to be beaten,' he wrote with whimsical humor to Washington.

October 10, 1781, 'Headquarters Before York,' Colonel Smith wrote to Sam Webb: 'Our first parallel is now compleat and our Batteries in full roar. We opened upon them yesterday three o'clock & have kept up the most sprightly peal ever since. . . . I am as yet well but like to have lost my hat by a 12 pr. yesterday.'

A week later Cornwallis lost more than his hat, and the band played an old English melody called 'The World Turned Upside Down.'

Early one dark morning of the fourth week in October, John Fiske tells us, 'an honest old German' — he was the night watch, they still had them in Pennsylvania — 'pacing the streets of Philadelphia began shouting, "Basht dree o'glock und Cornwallis ish dakendt."' Light sleepers awoke and threw up their windows. At New Haven and Cambridge the college students had the greens ablaze with bonfires. The Duke de Lauzun sailed for France with the news, and on November 27th, all Paris was illuminated and a *Te Deum* was sung in Notre Dame. Two days before, the news had reached Lord Germaine in London, and jumping into his carriage he drove to the Lord Chancellor's house, where the jovial Lord North paced the room all night, wildly crying, 'Oh, God, it is all over, all over!'

That night the King forgot to date his letter.

CHAPTER VII

ABBY ACQUIRES AN ARDENT SUITOR

ALL that year Mr. Adams is held in Europe, Johnny working hard at the University of Leyden — little town of Pilgrim memory. In Paris, he meets Marie Antoinette: 'An object too sublime and beautiful for my dull pen. . . . My dress was a decent French dress becoming the station I held . . . I found myself gazed at as we in America used to gaze at the sachems who came to make speeches to us in Congress. But I thought it very hard if I could not command as much face as one of the chiefs of the Six Nations. . . .'

Then the personal note recurs with its accents of starved affection:

'What a fine affair it would be if we could fly across the Atlantic as they say the angels do from planet to planet. I would dart to Penn's Hill and bring you over on my wings. . . . One thing I am determined on: If God should please to restore me once more to your fireside I will never leave it again without your ladyship's company, not even to go to Congress at Philadelphia — and there I am determined to go if I can get interest enough to get chosen. I would give a million sterling that you were here — and I could afford it as well as Great Britain can the thirty millions she must spend the ensuing year to complete her own ruin.'

And Abby is growing up. Languishing glances follow her as she passes down the elm-bordered street in looped panniers and little rakish hat. Romance is drawing near, but not yet the true romance.

The year passes with John Adams still a prisoner of conscience in France, although Charles is sent home to his mother.

'I have avoided saying anything about Charles to save you anxiety,' Mr. Adams writes from Holland. 'His health was so much affected by this tainted atmosphere, and he had so set his heart upon going home with Gillon, that it would have broken his heart to have refused him. . . . I hope I may never again have the weakness to bring a child to Europe.'

In

In a letter of Abby's to John Quincy after Charles's return the accent is noticeably mature:

'Where, or in what part of the world to address you, my dear brother, I do not know, but I can no longer restrain my pen. It is a long, a very long time since we have had any accounts from you. . . . It sometimes seems to me as if you were lost. . . . Our brothers are gone from home to school under the care of Mr. Shaw. Mamma considered it most for their advantage.' (Aunt Shaw's intellectual rating was very high!) 'We are indeed quite lonely. Charles was just become an agreeable companion; he is a sweet little fellow. Tom is something of a rogue, but will not be the less worthy in future, I dare say. You, my brother, have become so great a traveller that much is expected from you. I hope to see you return everything we wish you, and I dare flatter myself I shall not be disappointed. . . . You have a sister who looks forward to your return with feelings that 'tis not in the power of words to describe. . . . I cannot bear the idea of growing into life strangers to each other. Write constantly. . . . I will be punctual in future, I assure you. . . . I hope you keep a journal, 'tis a practice I have often heard highly recommended by pappa and mamma. Yours, my brother, may be replete with events.

'This goes by a vessel from Providence to England; In whatever country it reaches you, let it remind you of one whose chief happiness is in hearing from those absent persons in whose esteem she claims some small share, and who ever feels happy in subscribing herself

'Your affectionate sister

'A. ADAMS'

Thus Abigail Amelia at sixteen.

There are indications in Pappa's letter to Abby that winter, that his daughter is thinking of other things than high duty and the hope of Heaven. Young Abigail now wants to go to Europe — even as you and I.

'Your solicitude for your pappa is charming' — we glimpse the quizzical smile — 'but he is afraid to trust you to the uncertain elements, and what is infinitely more mischievous, to the follies and depravities of the old world, which is quite as bad as that
before

before the flood. He has, therefore, determined to come to you.'

But poor Pappa was not destined to go home yet, although the treaty had been signed in January. His Abigail, well-nigh worn out with waiting, writes one of her touching letters.

'MY DEAREST FRIEND:

'(Is there a dearer word than friend? Think of it for me.) The words "Three, four, five years absence"... sink into my heart with a weight, I cannot express. Do you look like the miniature you sent? I cannot think so. But you have a better likeness I am told. Is that designed for me? Gracious Heaven restore to me the original and I care not who has the shadow!'

Young Abigail, too, is now carrying a beloved image in her heart — a somewhat more romantic figure than that of good John Adams, for she is in the throes of her first romance with Royall Tyler, that brilliant young lawyer who was to become a dramatist. Royall was not an immature suitor, he was nine years older than Abby — whom he did not call Abby, but Amelia.

Whenever a young gentleman fell in love with Abby, he called her Amelia, for it is only to posterity that she is known as Abigail. There is no evidence that she was ever so called by any one. When she was a very little girl they called her 'Nabby,' then 'Abby,' until she became to her parents, 'My Daughter Smith.' To John Quincy Adams she was always 'My Sister' — they had no other daughter, no other sister. To Eugenio, Royall Tyler, and to the Colonel she was Amelia, although after marriage the Colonel seldom used her name in his letters, which usually began, 'My Dearest Friend,' 'My dear Wife,' or simply, 'My dear.'

Royall Tyler, and his Amelia used to take long horseback rides together, sometimes going to call on that very Palmer family whose Mary afterwards became Royall's wife. Mary was only a child then, but she recalls Abby at sixteen.

'She was a most beautiful girl. Full well do I remember how he used to sit and look at her. . . . I remember her riding habit of nankeen, turned up and faced with blue satin, and her little blue hat and feather.'

In

In Pappa's next, written from The Hague, we find him quaintly concerned lest young Abigail is becoming worldly, for, despite unstinted moral injunction, it appears that she has incredibly come to prefer a little pocket money for 'fripperies' to the weighty volumes of 'Bell's British Poets.' Perhaps the emotions engendered by First Love had something to do with that.

John Quincy, too, has begun to show the germ of the spendthrift! The children are growing up. There is a note of quizzical affection in the first paragraphs.

'THE HAGUE, September 26, 1782

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

'I have received your charming letter, which you forgot to date, by Mrs. Rogers. Your proposal of coming to Europe to keep your papa's house and take care of his health, is in a high strain of filial duty and affection, but not at all in practice. I have too much tenderness for you, my dear child, to permit you to cross the Atlantic. You know not what it is. If God shall spare me and your brother to return home, which I hope will be next Spring, I never desire to know of any of my family crossing the seas again.

'I am glad you have received a small present. You ask for another, and although it would be painful for me to decline the gratification of your inclination, I must confess, I should have been happier if you had asked me for Bell's British Poets. There is more elegance and beauty, more sparkling lustre to my eyes, in one of those volumes, than in all the diamonds which I ever saw about the Princess of Orange, or the Queen of France.

'I have a similar request under consideration from your brother at Paris. I don't refuse either, but I must take *il ad referendum* and' he adds with quaint humor 'deliberate upon it as long as their High Majesties do upon my proposition. I have learned caution from them, and you and your brother must learn patience from me.'

In his next letter to his worldly little daughter some very homesick pangs escape:

'Your obliging letter of 3d September I have received and
read

read with all the tenderness of a father deprived of the dearest and almost the only enjoyment of his life, his family.... I never receive a packet from your mamma without a fit of melancholy that I cannot get over for many days.

'Mine has been a hard lot in life, so hard that nothing would have rendered it supportable, especially for the last eight years, but the uninterrupted series of good fortune which has attended my feeble exertions for the public.'

And now Abby is experiencing the thorns as well as the roses and lilies of love. The jealousy of the Cranch cousins is creating discord. These were the daughters of John Adams's 'dear brother Cranch,' and Abigail's sister Mary, who 'had chosen the better part.' Lucy and Betsy, especially Betsy, seem to have desired young Royall themselves. According to Grandmother Tyler they could not endure seeing the sixteen-year-old Abby, a mere child, given the preference. So they began to fabricate 'calumnies,' trying to turn Abby against Royall, since they could not disenchant him with Abby. The affair proceeded with heartaches, misunderstandings, reconciliations, as love affairs will when mischief-makers are at work. Meantime, the young soldier who is to usurp Royall Tyler's rôle has also fallen a victim to Cupid's wiles.

CHAPTER VIII

HAVING TO DO WITH CUPID AND MARS

AFTER Yorktown there was no more fighting. The following June General Washington received a letter from Colonel Smith and Lieutenant Clarkson, who 'are led to imagine that this Season will be waisted' (was the Colonel thinking of the perfidious Miss Read?) 'with a degree of Unavoidable Inactivity which, not corresponding with the professional Ideas of a Soldier . . . we request that Your Excellency will permit us to join the Combined Forces in the West Indies.'

His Excellency responds antiphonally. 'I applaud, Gentlemen, this noble & generous ardor. . . . I most sincerely wish you every success your Military Genius & good intentions demand, and that you may return again to your country Armed with Laurels to enjoy the Honor and Satisfaction of your generous Services.' Then His Excellency set down his opinion of Colonel Smith in writing:

'Lieutenant Col. W. S. Smith, entered the service of the United States at the commencement of the present war. In August, 1776, he was appointed aid-de-camp to Major General Sullivan, with the rank of Major in the Army. On the 1st of January, 1777, he was promoted to be a Lieut. Col. in one of the additional battalions raised by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. After which he had the honor of serving as Inspector and Adjutant General to the Corps of Light Infantry, under the command of Major General, the Marquis de la Fayette, in the campaign of 1779; and in the month of July, 1781, he was appointed aid-de-camp to the Commander in chief of the American armies; in all which military stations, he behaved with great fidelity, bravery, and good conduct. During the course of service, Col. Smith has had many opportunities of signalizing himself by his gallantry, intelligence, and professional knowledge, in the several battles, enterprises, and sieges, at which he has been present, particularly, in the actions on Long Island, and Harlem Heights, at the siege of Newport, in the expedition under the order of Major General Sullivan, against the savages,

in

Head 8th

Dear Sir,

The enclosed ^{one} for yourself & the other for Major Clarkson, comes in consequence of General Knox's application. - To give you such letters, was my first intention, but not knowing who was to command the Forces destined for the invasion of Jamaica I had recourse to the Certificates with which you were furnished, & conceiving, it would appear ^{odd} to write, & not be able to direct. - Or to direct to the General & then not know his name. -

The direction is now left to yourself, when the knowledge is obtained. - You have, both, my best wishes, & I am & Sir

Y^r obed^t Serv^t
Edw. Mifflin

LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL SMITH WRITTEN JULY 10, 1782, ANSWERING HIS REQUEST TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE WEST INDIAN SERVICE

in the battle of Springfield, where he commanded a regiment, the successful siege of York, in Virginia, where the army of Lord Cornwallis surrendered prisoners of war, and on many other important occasions. In consequence of which, he hath merited my approbation and this testimony of his being a brave and valuable officer.

‘Given under my hand and seal, at the headquarters of the American army, the twenty-fourth of June, 1782.

‘G. WASHINGTON’

July 2, 1782, Lincoln, the Secretary of War, refers to the Colonel's request ‘to join any of the combined troupes of France & Spain, until he should be recalled by Congress’; and ‘has the honor to recommend him to this command as a gallant, enterprising & highly meritorious officer.’ The Colonel's desire, he wrote to Washington, was ‘Founded upon the prospect of active service in consequence of the arrival of a French Fleet upon the Coast. Should they have orders to cooperate with Your Excellency we shall wish for employment, the more active our Station the more agreeable to our wish.’

Washington wrote again a few days later:

‘HEADQUARTERS, 10th July, 1782

DEAR SIR:

‘The inclosed (one for yourself and the other for Major Clarkson) comes in consequence of General Knox's application. To give you such letters, was my first intention; but not knowing who was to command the Forces destined for the Invasion of Jamaica, I had resort to the Certificates with which you were furnished; conceiving it would appear odd to write, and not be able to direct, or to direct to the General otherwise than by name.

‘The direction is now left to yourselves when the knowledge is obtained. You have, both, my best wishes, and I am Dear Sir,

‘Your obedient Servant

‘G. WASHINGTON’

But the West Indian expedition did not materialize, and the Colonel, finding time heavy on his hands, proceeded to fall violently,

olently, if briefly, in love with a certain devastating Miss Read. He tells Sam Webb and Washington about it after he has recovered. In August, 1782, the Commander learns that 'After near three years absence I am on my way to visit my Father's Family in Connecticut.' His Father's family had been considerably incommoded by Mother's politics. After General Howe had taken possession of their home with war-time informality, because of Father's rebellious convictions (after which they had subsisted seven days upon potatoes), Mrs. Smith sought protection from the British, during which time Colonel Smith visited her under a flag of truce. But all of her sons were in the Revolutionary army — William, John, James, Justus; so eventually she threw in her lot with theirs.

'In Consequence of a letter from the Secretary of War,' Colonel Smith further informs General Washington, 'we have deferred our West Indian Expedition,' but 'in case of Active operations have expressed a wish to be employ'd.'

He was a sensitive spirit. 'I should have with Confidence returned to Your Excellency had it not been for one expression in the letter you honored me with to the Commander Gen'l of the Combined Forces viz. "and *lately* one of my aids De Camp." Your Excellency will excuse my giving the Candid Reason & pardon my error (if I am in one) as it is upon the right side. Previous to the forming of a most unhappy connection' — entrance of the Miss Read motive — 'my whole Soul was devoted to the Service of my Country & to Your Excellency's pleasure. I now find myself capable of once more entering upon this pleasing task, & being confident that you, Sir, would not wish to heap misfortune on the Unfortunate, I cannot but flatter myself I shall be honored with some employments.'

He was. 'When I mentioned you to the Commander of the Combined Forces in the West Indies,' His Excellency answers, 'I confess I did not imagine you had any intention of returning to my family. . . . I was recommending you to a Gentleman entirely a stranger by acquainting him that you had served in a character of first importance & Confidence.' He then offers the convalescent victim of Cupid the only appointment he has vacant, that of Commissioner of Prisoners at Dobbs Ferry, but warns him that it 'will not allow him a Deputy or Clerk. The official

official business will be weighty & will require constant attention & the utmost accuracy . . . If however you will Undertake it I shall with pleasure confer it upon you.'

Ensconced in his difficult new office, the Colonel finds time to answer an S.O.S. from Sam Webb.

'Not a stone, my dear Sam, shall be left unturned that can possibly tend to promote your interest. Every exertion that can possibly be made you may expect from your friend W.S.S.' Another day he signs himself, 'Your friend W. S. Smith in a hurry.'

And he mentions the healing wound:

'I have been confined almost as closely by Mars, that harsh murdering duty of war, as I formerly was by the God of Love who, assisted by his mother, spread the silken net with an enchanting grace & found more success in his capture than I believe his intentions were entitled to — However the Little Villain being almost conquered I have re-enlisted under the banner of war. . . .

'I have expressed a wish to the Gen'l to be relieved, but he strokes my back with the idea of command & thinks I had better stay, to which you know I must submit.

'If you visit our friends shake the males by the hand and salute the females for me with your usual delicacy.'

One of the Colonel's first requests is for another horse. 'Two horses, which is all that is allow'd, are not sufficient to give myself, Servant, private Baggage & official Papers a conveyance, consequently upon a sudden summons something must be Sacrificed.' But His Excellency was not sanguine about the Colonel's horse, as he has 'had ill-success in attempting to obtain alterations in arrangements from Congress.'

December 2, 1782, at '3 A.M.' the Colonel is writing a long letter to his commander. The British must be expecting to go home soon, for 'Sir Guy has informed Mrs. Montier that she must look out for another Tenant, that he should not want the House the ensuing Year.'

December 12th His Excellency finds the Colonel's spirits very low. 'My cherished Plan is laid aside. Whilst it existed my spirits were kept afloat & I scarcely Allow'd myself to reflect upon my Position, but with it every spur to my ambition is
vanish'd,

vanish'd, & I have nothing to engage my attention excepting Flagg Duty, the general Imbecility of the Post and the Slippery Glacis upon which my Reputation as an officer at present rests . . . with the smallness of this Garrison & the present Situation of the Works it must fall should the Enemy ever attempt it. Its Abatis being old and dry, may with ease be beat down with a Common Handpike. The Work itself is a curious compound of salient angles not Capable of supporting each other, & the men defending it against a small Column must be destroyed by the cover'd fire from the neighboring wood, the Parapet of the Citadel not being fence high, and the distance from the wood, small musket shot. . . . I wish to be informed (if proper) how long I may expect to remain here. I will then endeavor to suit myself to my station for the term, & submitting with my usual Resignation to your will, be persuaded that you are the only competent judge of the necessity of it.'

And the enemies were too friendly, actually drinking together, forgetting that it wasn't done in war-time! This sociability 'has already rose to such a height that parties from both sides pass arm'd within sight of each other without Inquiry or Insult.' Fancy rival armies forgetting to insult each other! 'And there have been frequent Instances of their meeting upon the Meadows between Paulus Hook & the main, grounding Their arms at some distance & drinking together. This is not only the Case with the Refugees but a Hessian Guard posted near Prior's Mills have done the same. Some drank together a full Hour, then parted friends. . . . Yet the Wretched Inhabitant detected in the Act is punished with severity.'

Conditions arising from the illicit traffic with the enemy were inevitably unjust, and the Colonel could not endure injustice. 'They even go so far as to strip women coming from the City on pretence of searching for goods, when the Villains themselves (perhaps) are returning with their pockets filled with Money for conveying Provisions to the Enemy.' And he asks permission to send on parole a prisoner who 'wishes to dispose of some articles he had with him to gather a little money for the approaching Hollidays. His Parents are in the City, aged and require his support.'

In a postscript Mr. Washington learns that 'Last Night the
refugees



MARGARET STEPHENS SMITH



SALLY SMITH ADAMS

refugees from New York & Levies had a Dance at Bergen.' There were compensations!

January 19, 1783, the Colonel writes of a rumor 'that Cornwallis has arrived in New York' and of 'a fleet from Charlestown with Troups. . . . If it is so it appears as if Government meant to give his Lordship an opportunity of brushing off the tarnish his arms received in the Campaign of 81.'

January 27, 1783, he writes with emotion of the wretchedness of 'sixty Seamen & prisoners' who have just arrived. 'No arrangements have been made for their Subsistence on the road by the Secretary of War. They are in the most distressed condition for the want of provisions . . . It is a most painful situation. If the officers at Paulus Hook will not relieve them I know not what steps to take for their immediate supply.' And in a letter to David Humphreys, 'I have done everything for them I could expect for myself in a similar situation.' . . . But David refuses to become sentimental over the enemy's sufferings.

In another letter to Washington, the Colonel refers again to the prisoners. 'Though we had no provisions to spare they expressed their gratitude for the treatment they met with while here. This relieves me in some measure from the apprehension that our poor fellows in New York might suffer.'

In February, Colonel Smith was sent to confer with the enemy, and on his return wrote to Washington of their expectation of news from Great Britain on the packet. 'On the sixth 60 guineas were laid to 30 at the Coffee House in favor of peace upon her arrival.' Two weeks later, 'Sir Guy Carleton delivered an amiable ultimatum about the exchange of prisoners, but I was pressed to remain until the arrival of the packet which is hourly expected with the happy news of peace. I must observe to your Excellency that during my stay with the Enemy I was treated with every respect and attention that my uniform and rank in the Continental Army could merit or demand.' And answering Washington's commendation, 'I am always happy when my conduct meets with your approbation.'

The Colonel's diplomacy at this difficult moment in this delicate situation repeatedly brought warm praise from Washington. 'I fully approve of your Conduct in the late attempt to negotiate with the enemy,' he wrote March 3d. In a letter
marked

marked 'private' the Colonel sends information concerning the Canadian border. He is especially interested because '... The fortress of Detroit, I suppose, will be possessed & Garrisoned by Troups. ... Should the Garrison be respectable I take the Liberty of requesting that Your Excellency will consider me as a Candidate for the Command ... I am willing to spend the remainder of my Life in Military Service. The more Eccentric my position the more agreeable to my wish;' and the Colonel 'hopes he will be honored with the Appointment provided no other better qualified is held up to view.'

He was doing quite a bit of Secret Service work for Washington at this time, mainly with relation to illicit trade with the British.

'Under the mask of interrupting commerce I shall sometimes review the scene,' he writes. No less a person than Governor Trumbull was suspected of winking at some of this traffic with the so-called enemy — so recently their fellow-subjects. 'There are numbers from Connecticut within the Enemy's Lines upon the same Business,' the Colonel remarks. He received an amusing letter on this subject from the Governor's son, Jonathan, Jr., Washington's aide. 'Why asperse the Sweet good Land of my Nativity, as bad perhaps as their neighbors — both bad 'uns God knows! ... You don't tell me a word of News. If you have none can't you make some?'

In June, the Colonel had another letter from Jonathan, Jr.

'You will receive this by the Hand of our friend George Washington, who is going by way of N York to enjoy the Benefits of the salubrious air of Rhode Island. ... As he will probably have occasion for a little *paternal* care & attention as he passes through N York, His Excellency requests ... that you will be so good as to give him such Assistance, *advice*, & Direction as he may find himself in need of.'

In his next Jonathan, Jr., teases the Colonel about an unsigned letter which, 'From its Image and Superscription I should suppose to be from you, but have no positive official or legal proof that it proceeded from you ... Humphreys and Walker attend his Excellency. I only am left alone like a gallant knight of Ancient Time for the protection of the Castle and Defense of the Virtue and Innocence of the Ladies.'

May

May 8, 1783, Washington appointed William Stephens Smith, Egbert Benson, and Daniel Parker 'Commissioners on behalf of the United States to attend to that part of the Provisional Treaty wherein it is agreed that His Brittanic Majesty shall Withdraw his Armies from the United States without causing any destruction or carrying away any Negroes or other property of the American Inhabitants.' These were difficult matters to adjust, constantly sifting truth from subterfuge, and Messrs. Parker and Benson seem to have left most of them to the Colonel, who handled them with the discipline of an officer, the skill of a lawyer, and the tact of a gentleman. There is a letter from a mock deferential Mr. Morgann about 'an horse' mysteriously missing, that, under the guise of eighteenth-century formalities, almost thumbs the nose at the distinguished officers. 'Catch me, if you can,' in effect says Mr. Morgann with two *n*'s. 'I find no authority for your claiming on behalf of Mr. Van Der Bergh An Horse stolen or taken in Dutchess County in the year 1780, and which you do not even suggest to be in danger of being embarked and carried away.' And leaving Mr. Van Der Bergh's horse entirely unaccounted for, he has, 'the honor to be, Gentlemen, Your most obed't Servant.'

In July and August there is much correspondence on the subject of postilion's caps — a commission thrust upon the ever-willing Colonel — turtles presented by Sam Francis, and the Colonel's apprehension that New York City is like to be depopulated. 'Mr. Francis says the Turtles were intended as a present and refuses to accept anything for them.' And Sam has expressed emotion over 'the attention of a letter' from His Excellency. The Colonel is 'at a loss for the proper dimensions for the Caps for the Postillions . . . unless they fit properly they will be troublesome to the Boys and never look well.'

There were a great many letters about 'the Boy's Caps,' but they were finally dispatched September 5th by 'Ensⁿ Shyber, late of the German Troups. Should they prove too large, small cushions within the Crown will make them fit & sett easier than without.' 'Ensⁿ Shyber' seems to have been a reformed Hessian of whom the Colonel approved. This 'Gentleman was A. D. Camp

Camp to Lt-Gen'l Knoblock, has obtained a very honorable dismission, and intends Settling in this Country.'

In the midst of complications and caps, the Colonel replies with characteristic grace to Bill North's order for three canes for Baron Steuben and his friends by requesting the Baron's permission to give him 'the one with your name engraved on it as a present from one whose affection for you as his Military Father urges him to make the offer.'

Baron Steuben, accepting the cane, replies: 'I beg you, my dear Smith, to be assured of my affection and of the satisfaction I receive in having a gentleman of Colonel Smith's military ability honor me with the appellation of his military parent.'

The Evacuation brought many problems. 'In consequence of numberless warm publications in our papers,' the Colonel wrote from New York to Washington, 'and the Unconstitutional proceedings of Committees, not less than 15000 inhabitants will be drawn from this Country who are not conscious of any other crime than that of residing within the British lines, in Consequence of which upon Evacuation we shall find a city destitute of Inhabitants.' The protection of citizens during this transition stage was a problem.

'Unless the Civil Magistrate is aided by the Military' (capital *M*, of course), 'I forsee nothing but Anarchy & Confusion. Unless checked in its earlier Budd . . . it will, I fear, prove a violent Flame,' and he proposes, 'Small parties of our Troups possessing the country as it becomes necessary for the British to withdraw. The Inhabitants would then not only be protected from being plundered by Stragglers from the British Camp, but would be sheltered from the rage of party Zeal which threatens to blaze with an alarming Fury.'

We can picture our Colonel as he looks in the Stuart portrait, being graceful, in eighteenth-century fashion, in those official last moments. In his headquarters in a house in lower Broadway, he arranged the details of the meeting between Washington and Sir Guy Carleton.

He continued as acting officer during the evacuation of New York and it was to him that New York City was officially surrendered.

A contemporaneous account tells how Sir Guy Carleton came
up

Head Quarters 7th June 1783

Dear Sir

You will receive this by the
Hand of our friend George Washington, who
is going, by way of N York, to enjoy the Benefits
of the salubrious Air of Rhode Island - the
Montpelier of America -

As he will probably have
occasion for a little paternal farewell
address as he passes through N York - the Re-
sident requests what I am sure you would
do with particular Delight, that you will
be so good as to give him such Assistance,
Advice, & Direction as he may find him-
self in need of on his Way -

Our friend will be able to inform
you verbally the Circumstances of the Disposi-
tion of great Part of the Army - I wish save
me the tazy fatigue of Writing in Detail -

With great Regard

Yours Dear Sir -

Yours Obedt Servt

John W. Smith

Jonathan Trumbull Jr

LETTER TO COLONEL SMITH FROM JONATHAN TRUMBULL, JR.,
WASHINGTON'S AIDE-DE-CAMP

up the Hudson in the frigate *Perseverance*, accompanied by Colonel Smith, Lieutenant-Colonel Elliott, and others. The next day Washington went down to Onderdonck on Tappen Bay to meet Sir Guy, after which they carried him in a four-horse carriage to Orangetown, where a sumptuous dinner was served by Sam Francis. Quite an orgy of sociability, those evacuation ceremonies. There were thirty guests who ate and drank 'in the peace and good fellowship without drinking any toasts' (for toasts were dangerous ground!). The following day Washington, the Governor, General Scott, Lieutenants Humphreys, Cobb, Trumbull, Colonel Smith, and Major Fish, Messrs. Varick, Duer, and Parker, went on board the *Perseverance* to be received with a salute of seventeen guns. Another 'elegant dinner' was prepared. Friendly enemies, indeed! 'Thus ended that great formal business.'

CHAPTER IX

IN WHICH A YOUNG DRAMATIST BECOMES THE VICTIM OF HIS OWN PLOT

SEVENTEEN-EIGHTY-THREE, the year that brought such epoch-making events as the disbanding of our armies, the signing of the treaty with France and England (Pappa's business), which formally created a new nation, the United States of America, found the two Abigails still in America, each concerned with her individual hopes and heart-aches.

Betsy and Lucy Cranch were not behaving at all well; indeed, Grandmother Tyler does not hesitate to implicate Mary, their mother. All were conspiring against the happiness of Abby and Royall. Young Tyler, entangled in feminine intrigue (Grandma Tyler is sure he gave Lucy and Betsy no cause), makes a subtle suggestion to Mrs. Adams. He will prove, he declares, that the calumnies of the Cranch cousins against him are inspired by jealousy, by the simple expedient of ignoring Abby and appearing to court one of the Cranches. Young Royall's plot was worthy of the seething imagination of an incipient dramatist. It succeeded too well.

As soon as his covered attentions were apparently detached from Abby and fastened upon Betsy Cranch, all of Royall's undesirable qualities magically vanished. He became all things commendable and eligible. But, as might have been expected, as soon as the budding dramatist was able triumphantly to display the success of his ruse to Mrs. Adams, he abandoned poor jealous Betsy — and the vitriol-throwing began again.

It could no longer affect Mrs. Adams, who always had a warm heart for Abby's lovers, but echoes of it reached Pappa in Europe, and he impulsively denounced the harmless young romanticist as 'idle and dissipated.'

It would seem as if Mr. Adams should have had more confidence in Royall. Had he not known and 'conversed with' his father, a most excellent gentleman, who had loaned Mr. Adams improving books — dreadful books, but Mr. Adams seems to
have

have liked them — Dr. South's sermons on 'The Wisdom of This World,' and Hurd's 'Dialogues upon Cæsar Borgia,' and other fearsome topics. Nabby at five, and Royall at fourteen, may have been gamboling about their parents' knees as they 'conversed.' It does not seem as if the jealous innuendoes of Betsy and Mother Cranch should have caused him to condemn the ardent young dramatist unheard, but he did. We cannot escape a suspicion that Mr. Adams found himself exhilarated by denunciation.

Whether Abby turned to thoughts of Europe when love seemed to fail, or whether she could not quite get over that craving for travel which, through Pappa's and Johnny's letters, had made Europe almost as much a part of her mental background as New England, we find the Wanderlust motive recurring in the letters. But Pappa, in Paris, is still discouraging.

'By this time, I hope, your inclination to travel has abated,' he gently admonishes. 'You little know the difficulties of a voyage to Europe, even in time of peace. Besides, the polite life in Europe is such an insipid round of head-dressing and play, as I hope will never be agreeable to you. Your country is young, and advancing with more rapid strides than any people ever took before. Your sex must preserve their virtue and discretion, or their brothers, husbands, and sons will lose theirs. . . . Your brother was at Hambourg on the 4th of April, but I hope is at the Hague by this time.'

For young John Quincy, now fifteen, having served for a time as secretary to Francis Dana, United States Minister to Russia, was at this moment traveling alone through primitive Russia, the Scandinavian countries and Prussia, to Holland. No care-free modern journey by express, but horseback and post-chaise travel, with three or four alien tongues to cope with on the way. But John Quincy by this time was a good deal of a linguist.

'Nothing in this life would contribute so much to my happiness, next to the company of your mother, as yours,' Mr. Adams writes to his daughter after John Quincy's arrival. 'I have reason to say this by the experience I have had of the society of your brother. He is grown to be a man, and the world says they should take him for my younger brother, if they did not know him to be my son.' Let Mr. Minnegerode sneer at poor Pappa's vanity.

vanity. I find it singularly helpless and disarming. 'He is very studious and delights in nothing but books' — evidently Pappa is unaware of that lifelong study of the ladies which must by this time have begun — 'which alarms me for his health; because, like me, he is inclined to be fat. . . . I lament that he could not have his education at Harvard College, where his brothers shall have theirs, if Providence shall afford me the means of supporting the expense of it. If my superiors mean I should stay abroad, I am not able to say what I shall do until I know in what capacity. One thing is certain, that I will not live longer without my family. . . .

'You have reason to wish for a taste for history, which is as entertaining and instructive to the female as to the male sex. Read the history of your own country, which . . . since the period of the late war is the most interesting chapter in the history of the world, and before that period is intensely affecting to every native American. You will find among your own ancestors, by your mother's side at least, characters which deserve your attention. It is by the female world, that the greatest and best characters among men are formed,' continues this staunch champion of our sex. 'When I hear of an extraordinary man, good or bad, I naturally, or habitually inquire who was his mother?'

Whether the fatherly heart of John Adams was not wholly satisfied on the subject of the much-maligned Royall, or whether his own longing for his Portia could no longer be set aside, he at last suggested that both wife and daughter join him in France. Evidently, Mrs. Adams considers for a time the possibility of leaving her daughter behind, married to the loved one; while Abby, convinced that Royall is true and all hers, has suddenly lost that yearning for travel and would now go to Europe 'rather from necessity than choice.'

'BOSTON, *January 6th, 1784*

'MY DEAR MAMMA:

'Yesterday afternoon Mr. V — handed me your letter. I presume you do not propose the question, "whether I would consent to your leaving this country without me," with an intention of being influenced by my reply, if you did, I confess I should

should not know what to determine. I had rather go from necessity than choice, the latter would never carry me, the former must. My inclination and wishes must be subservient to my duty. Willingly would I sacrifice my happiness, my peace, pleasure, and every agreeable idea, for a time, did I only involve myself in the event.' Poor Royall, of course, had been making scenes, and on the opposing side was that New England Duty with a capital D. . . . I have known your sacrifices, I have shared them with you, and have felt them sufficiently to judge in some degree of the anxiety and unhappiness you have suffered.'

Here Caroline has used her scissors, probably snipping off Royall, for, 'What I have said is all I shall ever say on the subject,' Abby concludes with finality.

Soon after this the final decision is made. Mr. Adams is glad to hope the best of Royall and if Abby and her beloved are of the same mind a year hence, they may be married.

Grandmother Tyler gives us a Radcliffian picture of the tear-drenched parting. How for a moment Abby even meditates disobeying her father; how, when she has finally sailed away, Mr. Tyler gives a fine exhibition of frenzy in the best style of his period, exclaiming, hand to brow, 'She is gone! I shall never see her more!' and sinks 'overcome' into a waiting chair.

The two Abigails took passage June 20th, 1784, on the good ship *Active* upon which for a time Abigail senior is very seasick. 'The decency and decorum of the most delicate female must in some measure yield to the necessities of nature' — so she describes it in her first letter to Sister Cranch. The cook is a 'great dirty lazy negro,' who serves the dinner with a complete disregard of the continuities; 'but the gentlemen know little about the matter, and if they can get enough to eat five times a day, all goes well.'

Of her first voyage young Abigail wrote nothing at all. Doubtless her days were spent chin in palm, either staring at the sea and thinking of Royall, or writing those thoughts in rounded periods on large sheets of durable paper.

As for poor young Royall, deprived of his lovely lady — alone in his uninspiring familiar routine while she is facing the thrills of Europe and a new life — he goes to board with the Palmers in Boston and continues to 'pursue his studies in the law.' Odd
how

how in those days they seemed forever to 'pursue' their studies! Did they, one wonders, never capture?

Royall could not foresee that some day he was going to be very happy in that house with the little girl who watched his very obvious anguish with secret pity and adoration. He was joyful for a time, Mary noticed, when an incoming packet brought him a two-volume novel from Abby, but very soon the volumes became smaller and finally ceased to come altogether, and little Mary often saw him 'shed tears of agony.'

In those days France was very far away.

PART II
AT THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH COURTS
LONDON — PARIS, 1784-1788

CHAPTER X

IN WHICH ABBY FALLS IN LOVE WITH HER LATE KING'S ISLAND

THE two Abigails arrived in England after six weeks at sea. It was the day of highway robberies when coach and post-chaise were quite regularly held up on dark roads, and England was obliging enough to stage a hold-up for them as they passed through Blackheath on their way to London.

They arrived, nevertheless, at 'Osborn's new family hotel, the Adelphi,' where rooms had been engaged for them. They had a 'handsome drawing-room genteely furnished and a large lodging room,' and were hardly there before callers began to arrive. London was full of American Tories.

'I hardly know how to think myself out of my own country,' Abigail writes to Sister Cranch. 'I see so many Americans about me.'

John Adams hears that his Abigail and his Abby have landed in England and dispatches a jubilant letter:

'I am twenty-five years younger than I was yesterday. . . . It is a cruel mortification to me that I cannot meet you in London . . . but I send you a son who is the greatest traveler of his age, and, without partiality I think, as manly and promising a youth as in the whole world. He will purchase a coach in which we four must travel from London. Let it be large and strong with an imperial' — a case for luggage, carried on top of the coach. 'You may come conveniently with your two children and your maid in the coach, and your man may ride on horseback or in the stage coach. . . . I can give you no counsel about clothes, but for yourself and your daughter I beg you to do what is proper, let the expense be what it may.'

As a result perhaps, of this generous *carte blanche*, Abigail becomes observant on the subject of fashions, and chats about them in a letter to Sister Cranch. She finds the London ladies less dressy than the American woman of fashion.

'Tis true you must put a hoop on and have your hair dressed, but a common straw hat, no cap, with only a ribbon upon the crown,

crown, is thought sufficient to go into company. Muslins are much in taste' (especially painted muslins), 'no silks but lute-strings worn.' Lutestring, an inexpensive silk, seems to have been the rayon of that day. 'But send not to London for any article you may want. You can purchase it much lower in Boston. . . . The head-dress disfigures them in the eyes of an American. I have seen many ladies, but not one elegant one since I came here . . . the softness which is so pleasing to the gentlemen' — though a feminist Abigail is eternally feminine 'is wholly laid aside here for the masculine attire and manners of Amazonians. . . . Our country,' she continues, 'is extravagant to astonishment in entertainments. . . . You will not find at a gentleman's table here more than two dishes of meat, though invited several days beforehand.' But a dinner she describes — 'Fried fish of a small kind, a pair of roast ducks, an almond pudding, currants and gooseberries' — is certainly no mean repast!

To his daughter Mr. Adams is moved to write in the more moral strain: 'At your age, travels are pleasing and instructive. That you may be able to derive the full benefit from them, let me recommend you to keep a journal.'

'The British Museum, Sir Ashton Lever's Museum, Wedgwood's Manufactory of Earthen Ware, Parker's Manufactory of Glass, I saw with great pleasure. You cannot see Mrs. Siddons, as she is absent. Westminster Abbey, and St. Paul's Church you should see.' It seems possible that to Eighteen neither would form the perfect substitute for Mrs. Siddons.

Seventeen-year-old John Quincy arrived promptly in London to engage the coach and outriders for his mother and his sister. In a letter to a relative in Boston he expresses his emotions, in John Quincy formula, at this reunion. 'You can imagine what an addition has been made to my happiness by the arrival of a kind and tender mother and a sister who fulfills my most sanguine expectations.'

But he was not to display his prowess as guide and traveler. In August Pappa arrived, after all, to take care of them himself. Abby's journal gives quite a melodramatic account of the event.

'LONDON, *Aug. 7th*, 1784. . . . At 12, returned to our own apartments; when I entered, I saw upon the table a hat with two
books

books in it; everything around appeared altered. I went into my own room, the things were moved; I looked around — "Has mamma received letters, that have determined her departure? — When does she go? — Why are these things moved?" — all in a breath to Esther.

"No, ma'am, she has received no letters, but she goes to-morrow morning." "Why all this appearance of strangeness? Whose hat is that in the other room? Whose trunk is this? Whose sword and cane? . . . It is my father's," said I, "Where is he?"

"In the room above." Up I flew, and to his chamber where he was lying down; he raised himself, upon my knocking softly at the door, and received me with all the tenderness of an affectionate parent after so long an absence. I never felt more agitation of spirits in my life; it will not do to describe.'

The brief statement in Mr. Adams's diary under the same date has less of eighteenth-century feminine sensibility: 'Arrived at the Adelphi and met my wife and daughter after a separation of four years and a half. Indeed, after a separation of ten years, excepting a few visits. Set off the next day for Paris.'

The story of that journey is told in Abby's journal. With a mind trained in clean austerities, no unnatural Puritanism, she sees the Old World with young eyes. Critical, as was her Colonel also, of its scheme of lesser liberty, yet sensitive to that beauty which is the product of the ages, she responds instantly to the serene grandeur of England. Constantly comparing France, to its disadvantage, with her late King's island, she yet as instantly appreciates the spontaneous charm of the French manner.

'*August 8th.* After two hours' preparation, pappa, mamma, myself and brother, in our own carriage, Esther and Briesler our two servants, set out from the Adelphi Hotel, so wretchedly equipped with horses that they could carry us no farther than Westminster bridge; here they refused to go, and the post-boys were obliged to obtain others. . . . There is a richness and elegance in the landscape here that is very beautiful. At 3 we went on board the boat for Deal; we landed at 6 the next morning . . . and had servants from every public house with offers of accommodation.

modation. We came to Monsieur Dessein's Hotel, the very place made famous by Yorick.' For Abby took her Sterne with her, even as Americans still take their Dickens. 'In this yard he wrote his preface to his journey, and perhaps in one of these désobligeants, he met Madame De —, and here is the very Monk, that gave his benefaction to our writer, and who has just passed my window to present himself to pappa. I do not think he is quite so respectable a figure as the one that accosted Yorick. At 12 we dined; we had a variety, but not in a style so agreeable to me as the English. At two, we set off from Monsieur Dessein's Hotel, on a journey of two hundred miles. The laws of this country are such as oblige every person who travels in a coach, to make use of six horses. We were equipped with six for our carriage, and a cabriolet with three horses for our two servants. The harness is not superior in any respect, to what we use in America for our carts and ploughs.

'On Tuesday we travelled four posts after dinner, and lodged at Boulogne, the Inn kept by an English family. The house was not as much *Anglaise* as I could have wished. There is certainly a great difference in favor of England. This country is by no means equal to it; the soil does not appear so rich or well cultivated; the villages are the most wretched of all the habitations of man; not one time in ten have I seen a glass window, nothing but wood. We dined in our carriage; mamma and myself were not out of it from six in the morning, until four in the afternoon. . . . The streets are very narrow and dirty; the houses low and heavy; these people do not appear sensible to any passions or affections whatever. The difference is striking in the postillions. The English have a sprightliness and alertness suitable to the employment; but in these, there is a heaviness, dirtiness, and no elasticity. We passed through Montreuil; this place is made famous to everyone who has read Yorick's Journey. I regret that I have it not with me. I should read it with more pleasure now than ever before, as we are to pass through every place which he describes.

'Today we have been obliged to travel fourteen posts, eighty-seven miles, in order to arrive at a place where we could be accommodated with lodging; it was 9 o'clock before we stopped for the night, which was at Amiens,

'At

'At Chantilly, we visited the seat of the Prince of Condé. First, to the kennel of dogs, two hundred or more, which the Prince keeps for hunting. There were more than two hundred horses, with their names over each manger. One of the grooms presented mamma and myself each with a little stick; upon which pappa gave him a crown. It is a custom, I suppose, to request your remembrance — a point I find that no one in Europe is fearful of asking. I am told that the Prince sometimes sups with his horses, and passes two or three hours with his dogs; rather an uncivilized taste I think.

'We were shown the theatre, in which he acts himself for the entertainment of his friends and family; he has a daughter who plays likewise. As it belongs to him, and he has the power of regulating it, I do not think it amiss,' Abby gravely decides. 'He resides at this castle from November to January; any strangers who are in town he invites to his plays. We went to see the Gardens — about 20 acres; a canal full of fish, groves and arbours, walks and windings, fountains playing, statues, flowers. Here was the car of Venus drawn by doves; the statue of Cupid, with a motto in French, representing the pursuit of love ineffectual.' All quite unlike the home life of the Adams family, but the shy, observant eyes take it all in. 'The furniture was of chintz, chairs, settee, and curtains. There were four fountains in the room . . . and a number of paintings, but they were not in a style that pleased me.' (Not clothed for the Boston winter, perhaps.) 'We next visited the English garden, as it is called.' And this feature was very French — of the day of Petit Trianon: 'In one part there was a representation of a cottage, a mill with a plough, and every utensil for a farmer; another building, they told us, was the barn; it had the appearance, on the outside, of a little dirty place, with old windows and little doors, when, to our surprise, we were shown into an elegant apartment, with pictures and paintings; the furniture of pink silk, trimmed with a deep, rich silver fringe and tassels; in the centre was a table with a set of Sevres China, white, with a gilt edge. We were shown, also, some buildings in the Chinese style. The whole was exceedingly beautiful; but as we ever draw degrees of comparison between what we now see, and what we have seen, I could not but give the preference to Pope's garden at Twickenham over everything I have yet examined.'

CHAPTER XI

IN WHICH ABBY MEETS SOME FAMOUS AMERICANS AND INFAMOUS PARISIANS

VERY soon after their arrival the Adams family began housekeeping in France. Abby's journal describes it:

'We have taken a house[†] at Auteuil, near Paris, very large and very inconvenient. There is a large room to receive company in, and a dining-room; all the bed-rooms are above stairs' — for in the New England of that day at least one of the bedrooms was on the first floor. 'There is a spacious garden.'

The reactions of Abigail senior to the French house are characteristically expressed: 'The salon,' she tells Sister Cranch, 'is about a third larger than General Warren's hall . . . an expense of 30,000 livres in looking glasses, but no table in the house better than an oak board and no carpet . . . the floors, abhorrent, are like Mrs. Quincy's floor cloth tiles.' The local comparisons are appealing. 'A man servant with foot brushes drives around your room dancing like a Merry Andrew' — even as to-day.

The Abigails did not at this time care much for Paris, the capital of the world. 'They tell me I am no judge, that I have not seen it yet,' Mrs. Adams writes. 'One thing I know that I have *smelt* it. It is the very dirtiest place I ever saw. Boston . . . is as much superior in my eyes to Paris as London is to Boston.'

The ballet at the opera also held shocks for the Massachusetts-born. 'Women leaping two feet into the air, actually showing their *garters*. . . I felt my delicacy wounded.' But wait! Some months later this confession: 'Shall I speak a truth — that repeated seeing of these dances has worn off the disgust?'

'The Marquise of Lafayette,' Mrs. Adams observes, 'supports an amiable character . . . but not a lady in our land would have gone abroad to dine so plainly dressed. . . . One of our fine American ladies who sat by me whispered, "Good Heavens, how awfully she is dressed!" I could not forbear replying that the lady's rank sets her above the little formalities of dress. She wore a
brown

[†] The Hôtel de Rohan.

brown Florence gown.' What, one wonders, was brown Florence?

Abby's journal continues the tale of festivities:

'August 15th. We dined with Mr. Barclay, in a friendly way, without form or ceremony. . . . Mr. Jefferson and daughter dined with us' — this was Jefferson's oldest daughter Martha, familiarly known as 'Patty' — 'and two gentlemen not to be known.'

Is it chance or Caroline's editing — so full of family feeling, so undivining of posterity's curiosities — that there is no comment of Abby's upon this first meeting with 'Mr. Jefferson,' that great if evasive personality with whom her Pappa's destiny was to be strangely conjoined?

But we have run away from Mr. Barclay's dinner party, which, Abby informs us, 'was in the French style. There is no such thing here as preserving our taste in anything; we must all sacrifice to custom and fashion. I will not believe it possible to do otherwise; for my pappa, with his firmness and resolution, is a perfect convert to the mode in everything, at least of dress and appearance.'

Pappa was an irreproachable guide. That conviction was never shattered!

'16th. Pappa's friends, the three abbés, came to pay their respects to us. They insisted that I should talk French with them; and I believe that I shall learn more from their great solicitude to converse, than in any other way.

'21st. This morning, mamma, myself, and my brother, went into Paris. On our way we made a call on Madame le Grand. The Abbé Arnaud was with us.' This was that same Abbé Arnaud who, when Paris was finding Gluck's operas unmusical and revolutionary, replied, 'I do not know that it is music, but perhaps it is something better.'

Abby, who does not find French houses measuring up to New England standards of cleanliness, pauses to commend Madame le Grand's *ménage*.

'This is the first house I have ever seen in any degree of order or neatness, being elegant and neat at the same time. At five my brother and myself went to la Comedie du bois de Boulogne. We were too early and walked in the wood; there were a great number

number of carriages. I imagined there would be much company at the Comedie, but found they were more disposed for walking than seeing the play.

'The music was pretty good, the actors and actresses only tolerable. I am not fond of comedy in general; I had rather be improved than amused,' observes this product of much moral injunction, but adds with a sharper edge of New England humor, 'if the distinction can be made between comedy and tragedy. The dresses did not please me as much as those in England.

'22nd. This day, fortnight, I left London; this day, ten weeks, I left America. . . .

'Mr. Jefferson, Col. Humphreys, and a Polish gentleman, lately from America, dined with us. Col. H. is appointed by Congress, Secretary of the Commercial Commission; he was an aide to General Washington. His appearance is soldier-like. I have not seen enough of these people to form a judgment, or to make any remarks with justice. . . .'

'24th. Went in the morning with my pappà and mamma to pay our respects to Dr. Franklin, this man on whom the world has passed such high encomiums, and,' Nineteen adds calmly, 'perhaps justly; he is now near 80 years old.'

'25th. We all dined today with the three abbés; these are persons who exclude themselves by their vows from marrying. The youngest is about 60; he is quite a gay young man — at least,' Abby adds not without humor, 'he appears to advantage when the others are present. He has long been acquainted with pappà, and visits us almost every day. We had a very elegant dinner; the apartments are very handsome. It is not the custom in this country to take tea in the afternoon.

'28th. Today we have had company to dine, the three abbés, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Hartly,¹ and Commodore Jones,² of whom so much has been said in various ways; he has received an honorary reward from the French King of the Star or Cross of St. Louis and is taken great notice of here.

'1st

¹ David Hartley, a member of Parliament, who had been opposed to the American War and the slave trade. He was appointed plenipotentiary by the English Government in 1782 to negotiate with Franklin.

² John Paul Jones.

'1st September. Dined at Dr. Franklin's by invitation; a number of gentlemen, and Madame Helvetius, a French lady 60 years of age. . . . Odious indeed do our sex appear when divested of those ornaments, with which modesty and delicacy adorn them.'

Of this ribald lady — called by Franklin 'Our Lady of Auteuil' — thus discreetly indicated by young Abigail, her mother has given an incomparable portrait:

'She entered the room with a careless, jaunty air. Upon seeing ladies who were strange to her she bawled out, "Ah, mon Dieu! where is Franklin? Why did you not tell me there were ladies here? How I look!" said she, taking hold of a chemise made of tiffany, which she had on over a blue lutestring, and which looked as much upon the decay as the beauty — for she was once a handsome woman. Her hair was frizzled, over it she had a small straw hat with a dirty gauze half-handkerchief tied over it, and a bit of dirtier gauze than ever my maids wore was bowed on behind. . . . She carried on the chief of the conversation at dinner, frequently locking her hand into the Doctor's and sometimes' (she was seated between Mr. Adams and Dr. Franklin) 'spreading her arms upon the backs of both gentlemen, then throwing her arm carelessly about the Doctor's neck. . . . I should have been greatly astonished if the Doctor had not told me that in this lady I would see a genuine Frenchwoman and one of the best women in the world. For this I must take the Doctor's word, but I should have set her down as a very bad one, although sixty years of age and a widow.

'After dinner she threw herself on a settee where she showed more than her feet' — which does not give us quite the requisite shock to-day. 'Thus you see, my dear, that manners differ exceedingly in the different countries.'

Abby's journal continues with its more discreet recital.

'September 5th. Today we dined with M. le Grand; after dinner it was proposed to go and see the Dauphin. The palace is within a garden in which no person is permitted to walk any days but Sundays which is a day devoted throughout the kingdom to the pleasures of everyone'—again not just like Boston. 'His lordship was playing with an iron shovel; there were four ladies attending him, one was a dutchess, and the others I know not what;

what; they were elegant women; upon our approaching, he was set to walking and running, to give us an opportunity of seeing him; he was a pretty, sprightly boy. There were more than a thousand persons to see this representative of despotism.'

Poor baby! It reads strangely to-day knowing his tragic destiny!

'19th. Today we went to see the balloon; it was to ascend from the garden of the Tuilleries; we had tickets at a crown a person. The balloon was made of taffetas, and in the form of an egg, if both ends were large; below it is a gallery where are the adventurers and the ballast. At eleven the cords, which were held by some of the greatest men in the kingdom, were cut. It was some time in sight, as they intended making some experiment upon their machine. At six in the evening it descended at Sevre, fifty leagues from Paris.'

The next entry records Abby's first impression of the famous Mrs. Bingham, Thomas Willing's daughter, who created such a sensation in European society. Evidently she did not reveal herself at first meeting:

'25th. We have had a company of twenty persons to dine with us, Mr. and Mrs. Bingham were among the Americans; they are from Philadelphia and are travelling for pleasure. Mr. B. is possessed of a large fortune. Both are young, Mrs. B. is only 20; she was married at 16; she is pretty, a good figure, but rather still. She has not that ease of air and manner which is peculiar to the women here, and which,' Abby adds — perhaps with a fleeting memory of Mme. Helvetius — 'when it does not exceed the bounds of delicacy, is very pleasing. I admire her that she is not in the smallest degree tinctured by indelicacy. She has, from the little acquaintance I have had with her, genuine principles; she is very sprightly' — despite the principles — 'and very pleasing.'

'27th. Went to the Italian opera, and saw presented a little piece that has made a great noise; it is a history of the whims and coquetry of two lovers, a good representation of the ridiculous.'

At their next meeting Mrs. Bingham's charm was more obvious.

'30th. Went to Paris, and dined by invitation with Mr. Jefferson;

erson; met Mr. and Mrs. Bingham, and Mrs. Barclay. Mr. Jefferson,' Abigail remarks, judicially, 'is an agreeable man. Col. Humphreys is I don't know what, a sensible man, I believe, but his address is not agreeable'; then hastens to add, 'he is I believe a very worthy character. Mrs. Bingham has a very happy turn of expression, she will not fail to please. Mr. B. is delicately attentive.

'4th October. Went to dine with Dr. Franklin, found Gov. Pownall^{*} and lady, Mr. Jefferson, Col. Humphreys, the two abbés, and some others. After dinner my brother and myself accepted of Mr. Jefferson's invitation, and went to the concert at the Chateau of the Tuilleries. Prince Henry, brother to the King of Prussia, was there.

'5th. Pappa went to Versailles; every Tuesday is called Ambassador's Day; in general they all attend.

'6th. Today pappa dined with the Spanish Ambassador; when he returned he gave us an account of his visit; he is about 80 years old, and has lately married a young lady of 16, his niece and heir to his fortune. Pappa told me it was an affecting sight to see such a couple; he seemed very much disgusted with the match.

'7th. Governor Pownall and lady, a Mr. Hobart, an English gentleman, dined with us today. After dinner Mrs. Pownall very politely invited me to accompany her in visiting the house and garden of the Duke de Chartres; I did so, and was not only pleased with my acquaintance with her, but exceedingly gratified with what I saw. The Duke has built and furnished the house in English style. I can truly say I never saw anything so elegant.

'9th. My brother and I took a walk in the garden of the Friars. This class of men are perhaps the most numerous of any in France, and they have, in general, appropriated the best situations to themselves. One seldom sees a high hill, but it is covered with a monastery or a convent.

'12th. Pappa and my brother dined with the Swedish Ambassador; the dinner was very sumptuous and elegant; it was served in plate, except the last course, which was China, gilt knives, forks, and spoons.

'13th.

^{*} Formerly Colonial Governor of Massachusetts.

'13th. Went in the afternoon to visit Madame le Grand; met a young French lady who spoke English very well. It is the custom in this country never to introduce persons to each other. I found her very agreeable and should have been happy to have requested to commence an acquaintance, but that is not done by words. If you wish to be visited, you must make the visit first, and no one will be so unpolite as not to return it; thus your acquaintance commences. And when you part, it is not the custom to ask the return of the visit. Came home and found Mr. Jefferson here again. . . . He is an agreeable man.'

About this time Abby sat down to compose a letter to her friend Mrs. Warren, who was, although we do not know it today, the author of dramatic pieces dedicated to, and praised by, John Adams and Alexander Hamilton. Abby's letter shows how distinguished elders were addressed in 1784:

'I should have availed myself, Madam, of your permission to write, ere this, had an opportunity presented. . . . I now have the pleasure to present myself to you from Auteuil, a few miles from Paris. I had the pleasure of seeing your son Winslow in London. . . . Mamma was very unfortunate in the letters which you entrusted to her care for him. In the perturbation of spirits at leaving her friends, she put them in the pocket of the chaise, and forgot them. . . .

'I hear you inquire, Madam, how I am pleased with this European world. . . . The contrast is by no means so remarkable between America and Europe as is generally supposed. I am happy to assure you, that I give the preference to my own country, and believe I ever shall. In England the similarity is much greater to our own country than here, and on that account I found it more agreeable. But [here] I have seen nothing that bears any proportion to my ideas of elegance, either in the houses or in the appearance of the people.

'Will you permit me, Madam, to hope for the pleasure of hearing from you? It will, I assure you, confer happiness, and shall be esteemed a favor by your young friend,

'A. ADAMS.'

We return to Abby's journal.

'14th Oct. Mr. Jefferson sent us cards yesterday to see the ceremony

ceremony of taking the veil, in the convent where his daughter is to receive her education.' And Abby gives a detailed account of her first glimpse of the picturesque pageant of Catholicism. Thanks to Mamma's instruction and present opportunities she understands the priest's sermon.

'He began by expatiating upon the goodness of the king; then on the excellence of every class of people, from the throne to the footstool. He told them this was a very good world to live in, and that it was very wrong to quit it. After dwelling a long time upon its excellence, he told them a false philosophy had got into the world, and everything was becoming bad, and they had the happiest prospect in quitting it. When he invited the others who were present, to follow the example of these nuns, I observed the English girl, who held the candle for one of them, look very sharp upon the other English girl, whose countenance expressed that she knew better than all this, that she had no such intention — quite right, she!

'The relations of the two victims appeared less affected than any one present. It is very probable,' Abby decides, 'that they are the victims of pride or wickedness.'

'19th. Mr. Bingham came flourishing out in the morning to accompany pappà to Versailles to be presented to his most Christian majesty, the King of France, with his four horses and three servants, in all the pomp of an American merchant.'

The Adams family saw a great deal of the charming Mrs. Bingham and the less admirable Mr. Bingham.

'22d. Breakfasted with Mr. and Mrs. Bingham, and went with them to see the Duke de Chartres' gardens, which, if they were intended as an imitation of the English, were rather a burlesque upon them, a proof how very inadequate the French are, to imitate the perfection to which the English have arrived. A French gentleman accompanied us, a very agreeable man, who has been in America, and was perhaps improved. What a local sentiment is this, and yet perhaps a just one, for this gentleman certainly discovered more modesty, than those who have been only used to French manners would.

'26th. We all dined with Mr. and Mrs. Bingham at their hotel, which is the Hotel Muscovy. There was much company: Mrs. B. gains my love and admiration more and more every time I

see

see her; she is possessed of more ease and politeness than any person I have seen. Mr. B. is an agreeable man, but seems to feel the superiority of fortune more than Mrs. B. After dinner we went to the play without saying a word to anybody, which was hardly civil according to my ideas, but it was French.

'28th. Dined today with Monsieur Chalut, brother to the Abbé. . . . There was other company, and by their ribbons I suppose were great folk. But one may dine in a hundred companies, and converse with everyone without knowing them. We had an elegant dinner all served in plate, which I cannot like as well as china, though it has the appearance of more riches and grandeur. After dinner we went to pay our respects to madame, the Marquise de la Fayette. We were shown to the ladies in their rooms. Madame, her mother and youngest sister, were sitting in an unceremonious way with their work, in that social manner that we boast of in America. She received us very civilly and cordially, with great ease and goodness, and very politely apologized for not waiting upon us first. She speaks English a little. I had always heard she was handsome; I do not think her so: she was not painted, and very little dressed; she is very agreeable and pleasing. As we came out, we met Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Williams going in. We went to the Comedie Française; they gave us two laughable pieces, but I did not feel disposed to laugh at them.' Nor do we to-day find the prolixity, indecency, and artificiality of the French comedy of that period very entertaining.

Another day we hear again that, 'Madame de la Fayette is a fine woman: . . . a little French in some respects; sprightly and very pleasing. As we were sitting round the fire, the door opened, and this lady entered with all the freedom of a familiar friend, how much more agreeable than any other manner possible. The women universally in this country, and the ladies of education in particular, have an ease and softness in their manners that is not found in any other country, perhaps in the world; it is very charming, and were it not for some little exceptions' — a little French perhaps — 'their manners would, I think, be perfect. She sat half an hour, and left us much pleased with her.'

'Nov. 11th. Pappa and mamma being indisposed, my brother and

and myself dined at Mr. Barclay's. We found mostly Americans; I had rather they had been French.' Abigail is becoming cosmopolitan. 'In the eve we went to the Italian comedy; I was pleased and entertained.

'18th. Today we had company to dine, all Americans but the Marchioness de la Fayette; no one except Mr. Jackson merits a second observation. He is without exception, the most polite man I have ever seen; by politeness I mean not that light superficial frothiness which sometimes conceals a good deal of rudeness, but a certain something in his manners and appearance that cannot fail to please; my pappa calls him the Sir Charles Grandison of this age.

'21st. Went to Paris in the evening, to the Comedie Française, where was played *Amphriton*, a comedy of Moliere's.

'28th. A most beautiful day; we had to dine with us Mr. Jackson, my favorite; Dr. Bancroft, the author of Charles Wentworth; he is about 40; his manners and conversation are agreeable, and when one has heard him converse for a few hours, one is rather pleased than otherwise' — a not too ardent tribute. 'Also two young Americans, a Mr. B. a Virginian, the other a Philadelphian; and I do not believe, that to have searched the kingdom of France, one could have found two greater curiosities in appearance.' So Abigail also had that experience of meeting strange Americans in Europe. 'Mr. Jefferson,' she concludes, 'is the only gentleman I have had any kind of conversation with since I have been here.

'I have often complained of a stiffness and reserve in our circles in America, that was disagreeable — what everyone complained of and no one banished; a little French ease adopted would be an improvement. There are many customs here that might advantageously be carried into practice with us, and others' — imagination will readily fill in the discreet generality — 'that would not be found agreeable. In company here every one consults his own pleasure; the ladies walk about, view the pictures, chat with any one who pleases them, of general subjects, such as the spectacles; no one is introduced, but this does not retard the general sociability; personal subjects are to be avoided, and no ill must be spoken of any one.

'30th. Pappa went to Versailles by himself last Tuesday; he introduced

introduced Mr. Jackson, Mr. T. and Mr. Bingham, the first American gentlemen in private characters that have been introduced at this court. Mr. B.'s ambition promoted it; what it will promote him to I do not know; if to what he wishes, it is easily determined. . . .

'*December 1st.* This morning Col. Humphreys came out with Mr. Williams to introduce a Mr. S. [evidently Mr. Short] a young American from Virginia; he is to live with Mr. Jefferson; tomorrow he dines with us. I have not seen him, as I do not make my appearance to the gentleman.'

Abby finds Baron de Staël, Madame's future husband, very good to look at:

'*2d.* Today we had company to dine; the Ambassador of Sweden, and the Baron de Guere, Mr. Haldersdorf, and many others. The ambassador is a man of five and thirty, but appears not more than twenty-seven at most; he is tall, graceful in person, a fine complexion, good color, good features, in short a very handsome man. He told my brother that a French lady of my age would appear ten years older than I did, their complexions being so very dark, adding that one could not find in France so good a complexion as mine; I could with justice have returned the compliment, if it was one. . . . I sat next to Mr. Jackson at table, next to him was seated Madame Bingham who by an exuberance of sprightliness and wit, slips from the path of being perfectly agreeable.' In short, Mrs. Bingham monopolized the desirable Mr. Jackson.

'We went next to the Comedie Française to see *Figaro*' — and Abby need not have been so snubby about good M. Beaumarchais, who had well-nigh ruined himself in the American cause, sending secret ammunition and other aid to the Revolutionary army. 'This is the 64th representation. It is indeed surprising that a piece with so little merit should fill the house so frequently; it is from beginning to the end a piece of studied deception and intrigue; it has never been printed, and it is thought it never will be.' How unsafe is prophecy! 'There appears to be a great deal of low wit, to gain the approbation of the vulgar; every one exclaims against the morals of it, and yet everyone adds to the number of spectators. Mademoiselle Contar plays admirably in it; she is certainly charming; so much ease, grace,
and

and such an apparent simplicity, that one might take her for a saint, if they knew not that she was a courtesan.' Sophistication has flowered swiftly in the air of France.

'Dec. 31st. Today by invitation we dined with the abbés. Mademoiselle Lucille was there. She has the ease, sprightliness, and apparent solicitude to please, of a real French girl. I sat next to her at table, she corrected my French, I in return, corrected her English. She sings, and although I think she has not the least voice in the world, complies with your request without hesitation. . . . The Abbé Arnaud, though 60 years old, is a man of much vivacity and wit. The Abbé de Mably, who is always of our parties there, is eighty years old, a man of great learning; he has written many things that are highly spoken of, among them some letters to my pappà upon the forms of our government; they have been translated, and three editions of them out in London. After we came away, we went to Mr. Jefferson's, where I had the honor and pleasure of making tea for the gentlemen, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Williams, Mr. Humphreys, Mr. Short, Mr. Adams and his son, mamma and myself. . . .' Who would not drop in at that tea party!

CHAPTER XII

INTRODUCING EUGENIO, SOME EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AVIATORS, AND MONSIEUR LAFAYETTE

WHO was Eugenio? Of his identity there seems to remain no trace. That, like the Adams family, he lived near Boston, was a friend of theirs and of Jefferson's, and undoubtedly a suitor of Abby's, is evident from his letters, which are full of charm and personality. That he is a citizen of the world, one she depends upon to advise her in the matter of high social usages, is also evident, but nowhere do we hear of him save as 'Eugenio.'

While the Adams family were in France, Eugenio was in England, from which he answers Abby's letter.

'LONDON, 5th, November, 1784.

'Monitor, Amelia! I don't know whether the idea is more flattering or affronting. What an old fellow one would suppose Eugenio to be, from the task you assign him! But to advise, as you say, is the criterion of friendship, and this only was the extent of my offer to you on your arrival. I thought it would be of advantage to you to chat with one acquainted with the ways and things of this old world, that you might better know how to accommodate yourself to your new situation. Therefore I made you a tender of my services, and am not a little pleased at your accepting them. Be assured, they will always be at your disposal. You flatter me much, Amelia, but I hope to merit your commendation.

'Well may you say, "why have you not wrote me for so long a time?" To justify myself, know that I have been buried among trees and bushes these two months past, out of the way of the post, in a sequestered valley. What had I to employ my pen upon? Trees, birds, flocks, rivers, hill and dale are themes long since worn out. But shall I make you one reflection? 'Tis very like a monitor. Human nature, Amelia, is the same throughout the world. In this retired corner were pride, vanity, ostentation of worldly possessions to be found as elsewhere.

'You

'You seem to be very strong in American acquaintance at Paris. I am sorry for it, though you are so much pleased. I would rather wish you to be more Frenchified, that you might be intimately acquainted with the character of the people. You would object to the means, perhaps, and condemn the trifling requisites, such as dress, levity, &c. But what are these? Things of no lasting moment to a sensible mind, and may be disposed of when we please. This, then, is the task I assign you *en qualité de Tuteur*.

'When I shall have the pleasure of meeting you at Auteuil I cannot say, further than that I wish it might be tomorrow. But here, there, or wherever, believe me to be, with much esteem, respect, and friendship,

'Yours,

'EUGENIO'

In France, Abby's journal continues:

'*Jan. 1st, 1785.* Pappa went to court, it being a great day; the ladies were much dressed; the king and queen first received the ambassadors, then went to mass, then dined in public, to give all the world the opportunity to see them eat and drink; this ceremony is called the Grand Couvert, of which there are three in a year.

'*3d.* It is customary in this country, and I believe in all Europe, to visit and receive visits, to congratulate every one of their acquaintance upon the New Year. I asked a gentleman about the dress of the ladies on Saturday at Versailles, but he could not tell me more than pappa. He related an anecdote of one of the feasts given to the King of Sweden, last year. Madame Adelaide, one of the king's aunts, addressed herself to Monsieur le Comte de Mercy "How comes it, Monsieur Ambassador, that you are so little dressed on this occasion?" The ambassador seemed a little surprised: "I do not know, madam; my coat cost me 80,000 livres." "Then," said she, "you should have pinned the price on the back of it." . . . It was green velvet,' Abby adds, 'very plain, with diamond buttons. . . .

'My brother and myself attended one of the little theatres; afterwards we walked in the Palais Royal; this is a very fashionable public walk since the Duke de Chartres has improved it so much.

much. It was formerly a small public garden. The Duke, it seems, was quite 'American.' 'The lower part of the houses is converted into shops. It was generally supposed the duke would ruin himself by the expense he was at, paying ten per cent for the money he borrowed, and they called it the Duke de Chartres' folly; but, from its beauty and lucrativeness, it proves to be wisdom. . . . When I came home, I had a feast of letters from America.'

To-day we have our Lindbergh, in 1785 we had our Dr. Jeffries.

'Last Friday, the 7th of January, M. Blanchard and Dr. Jeffries ascended at Dover in a balloon, and in two hours descended a league from Calais, to the great joy and admiration of everyone who saw them. The people of Calais presented M. Blanchard with a gold box, the figure of his balloon on the cover, and presented him with letters, giving him the title of citizen of Calais. They offered the same to Dr. J. but he, being a stranger, declined them; probably thinking his situation in England would be rendered disagreeable by such a distinction. They likewise requested of M. Blanchard his balloon to put into the Cathedral Church at Calais, as the ship of Columbus was put into a church in Spain. These gentlemen have arrived in Paris. . . . There being but little wind, they did not make so quick a voyage as some others have done. M. Blanchard is a Frenchman, Dr. Jeffries an American.

'*12th January.* Today pappa carried mamma and myself to see two churches, Notre Dame and St. Sulpice; these were very beautiful. I have not knowledge sufficient to describe them. We went also to see the Enfants Trouvés built by Louis 14th; this claimed my attention more than the churches. All new born children are received here, at all hours, night and day, without question or formality. In the hall of this house there are an hundred cradles to receive the infants. The sister who governed here . . . had a countenance expressive of all that was amiable. . . . While we were looking at them, and considering their helpless situation, unprotected by those to whom they owed their lives, another was brought in. The motto of the house is: "My father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken care of me."

'*20th.*

'20th. Mamma and myself went to Paris, and paid a visit to Mrs. Bingham in the Palais Royal; I must confess that she has excellencies that overbalance every want of judgment, or that love for gay life, which is very conspicuous in her, but which I do not wonder at at all. It is united with so many agreeable and amiable qualities that it is impossible not to admire her. I never see them that I do not gain a higher opinion of that state' (presumably, matrimony), 'in which I believe one may most enjoy life.

'27th. A small company to dine today; Mr. Jefferson and Miss Jefferson we expected, but the news of the death of one of Mr. J.'s children in America, brought by the Marquis de la Fayette, prevented. Mr. Jefferson is a man of great sensibility and parental affection. His wife died when this child was born, and he was almost in a confirmed state of melancholy; confined himself from the world, and even from his friends for a long time; this news has greatly affected him and his daughter. She [Martha] is a sweet girl, delicacy and sensibility are read in every feature, and her manners are in unison with all that is amiable and lovely. Col. Humphreys has taken the most effectual means of gaining my good opinion; no more reflections upon the stiffness of his manners must proceed from me; he presented me today with a copy of a poem written by himself, and addressed to the army, while he was Aide to General Washington. I confess I had not formed an idea of his being a poet. This was no doubt owing to my want of penetration. It is well written, and the verse is easy.

'Mr. Short grows very sociable and pleasant. He appears a well-bred man, without the least formality or affectation of any kind. He converses with ease, and says many good things. He wants to go to a convent to learn French.' — Very Virginian of Mr. Short. 'The abbé, upon my inquiring today after Made-moiselle Lucille, told me she had gone to a convent, and added, that the women of this country were so dissipated, and the example they set their daughters so bad, that they were obliged to put them into convents, to keep them out of this influence. The abbé has a most detestable idea of the women of this country, perhaps justly; but,' Miss Abby adds surprisingly, 'I do not see how they can be otherwise, the manner of education, and
above

above all, the shocking manner in which they are sacrificed in the most sacred of all connections; oftentimes nothing but inconstancy and wickedness can result from it.

'30th. This eve Monsieur le Marquis de la Fayette called upon us, for the first time since he arrived. I had neglected to be properly dressed today and was punished by not seeing him. He gave my pappa and mamma agreeable accounts of our State, and of Boston in particular; he says it is the best regulated, and he observed the most harmony and agreement in the people, of any of the States; he had visited all.

'February 7th. Today we dined with Mr. Jefferson. He invited us to come and see all Paris, which was to be seen in the streets today, it being the last day but one of the Carnival, and to go to the mask ball in the evening. I had but little curiosity to go; the description of those who have seen it, has not given me spirit enough to spend all the night to be perhaps not gratified. The ball begins at one o'clock in the morning and lasts until six. There are no characters supported at them here, as in England, nor any variety in the dresses. Mrs. Bingham says it is the only amusement that is not superior here to what they have in London. She is so delighted with Paris, that she says she shall never go to America with her own consent; she expects to be carried in the spring. I confess that I cannot form an idea of this disposition.' Abby pauses to indulge in a bit of Puritan prophecy — 'She has, I believe, by this time, laid the foundation of a future life of unhappiness. . . . Miss Jefferson dined with us, no other company.'

The next day Abby meets Lafayette at Dr. Franklin's. 'There was a large company: our family, the Marquis de la Fayette and lady, Lord Mount Morris, an Irish volunteer, Dr. Jeffries, Mr. Paul Jones. The Dr.'s family consists of himself, Mrs. Hewson, an English lady' (his friend 'Polly'), 'Mr. Beach, his grandson, and Mr. Williams who is generally there. The Marquis de la Fayette appears a little reserved and very modest.

'Lord Mount Morris attracted my attention' — apparently Abby attracted his, but Mrs. Bingham monopolized him — 'he is a very handsome man. He looked inquiring, but Madam Bingham, who is well acquainted with his lordship, engrossed
all

all his attention. There was another Irish gentleman who was passable. Dr. Jeffries, the man of the day, I happened to be seated next at table. I made some inquiries respecting his late voyage aerial; he did not seem fond of speaking of it; he said he felt no difference from his height in the air, but that the air was finer and obliged them to breathe oftener, and that it was very cold. He has been so cavilled at in the papers I don't wonder at his reluctance at conversing upon the subject.

'We had a sumptuous dinner, it is now Lent, and all the French are doomed to fish. Our French servants have purchased themselves dispensations for eating meat, because they live with us. However improbable this may appear, it is a fact. . . .

'The Marquise de la Fayette was quite sociable with papa, and professed to be a physiognomist. She would not allow that I was *triste*, but *grave*.'

And Abby is reading a best seller of that day, an eighteenth-century muck-raker, on the subject of Paris:

'We have a *tableau* of Paris, which if it is a true picture, is a most lamentable one. I would not exclaim against a people of whom I know so little, otherwise than from hearsay, yet plain facts astonish me sometimes. Well might Mr. Jefferson say, that no man was fit to come abroad until 35, unless he were under some person's care. . . .

'21st. Dined at the Marquis de la Fayette's with a circle of Americans. It was intended as a compliment; but I had rather it had been thought so to introduce us to French company. The fondness that Madame la Marquise discovers for her children is very amiable; and the more remarkable in a country where the least trait of such a disposition is scarce known. She seems to adore them, and to live but in them. They both speak English, and sing it; the Marquis appeared very fond of them likewise. He is apparently a man of great modesty and delicacy of manners.

'Speaking of Mrs. Jay, on whom every person who knew her when here bestows many encomiums, Madame de la Fayette said, she was very fond of her; she added, Mrs. Jay and she thought alike; it was Mrs. Jay's sentiment that pleasure might be found abroad, but happiness could only be found at home. She told my pappa that Mrs. Jay did not like the French ladies.

Neither

Neither do I, said she. From the account she had heard of the American ladies, she believed she should be pleased with them, and should the Marquis ever again visit America, she would accompany him. I was seated at table between Mr. Bingham and the Irish gentleman whose name I have forgotten; Mr. B. was insupportably disagreeable. I cannot but dislike his manners in general; to his wife they are better than any man I have known. Mrs. B. was as ever, engaging. The elegance of her dress demands a description; black velvet with pink satin sleeves and stomacher, a pink satin petticoat, and over it a skirt of white crepe, spotted all over with gray fur; the sides of the gown open in front, and bottom of the coat trimmed with paste; it was superb, and the gracefulness of the person made it appear to peculiar advantage.' Reading on we learn that, 'To *avoid* singularity and the observation of the company she goes into, she wears more rouge than is advantageous to her.

'*26th.* Today Dr. Franklin, Mr. Williams, and a Monsieur St. Olympia, a French West Indian, dined with us; the latter has been writing upon the trade of the Americans with the West Indies. He inquired if the ladies in America talked politics. Pappa told him they conversed much upon politics, and that the liberties of a country depended upon the ladies.

'*March 3d.* My brother and myself went to the Italian comedy. The music was excellent but it will not do to see any dancing after that at the opera, which exceeds everything in the world. I have heard it observed that the art of dancing is carried to greater perfection in this country, than any other of the arts.' So Abby also has become reconciled to the garters.

'Mrs. Bingham came out to make us a visit and drank tea — the bloom of the rose is fading, dissipation will blast the fairest flower that ever bloomed; 'tis a pity so much delicacy and beauty should be sacrificed to a few weeks of pleasure.' Fortunately Abigail's dismal forebodings were not realized. Mrs. Bingham's beauty made a prompt recovery.

CHAPTER XIII

FAREWELL TO FRANCE

PARIS is a great shock-absorber. We learn now that the 'Tableaux of Paris' by de Mercier (in six volumes), 'is very entertaining; he had lashed where he disapproved, and is just, it is said, upon every thing. When he published his work, which he did without approbation of the King, the bookseller was taken up. When the author found this was the case, he went to the lieutenant of police, and told him he was himself the author. The police made him a compliment upon his work' — how like the French police! — 'but he was soon obliged to leave the kingdom, and it is probable can never return. Thus it is, when a man speaks truth in this country he is banished from it,' concludes our young citizen of the land of free speech.

March 9th. Mr. Williams went with us to see the gallery of pictures belonging to the Duke de Chartres, in the Palais Royal. As the young princes, his children, were with their drawing master, we were not permitted to go through the house, but were obliged to pass through the court; thus little people must submit to greater. I was not particularly pleased with this collection. Indeed, there is a disagreeable sensation mixed with the pleasure I derive from my view of the paintings that I have yet seen in Europe; though I find the impression is not so forcible as it was at first.' Undeniably Abby is becoming accustomed to scant raiment and other evidences of abandon. 'But even now I turn involuntarily aside, when others are admiring; perhaps it is affectation, yet I do not believe that it is not a better principle.

'We went to see Mlle. Bertang [Bertin], who is milliner to the Queen of France and to all Europe. She is now employed in making clothes for l'infante d'Espagne, and the Princess of Portugal. The former is to be demanded in marriage the 28th of the present month, by the Prince of Portugal; she is now ten years old; the clothes are very rich and superb. Mademoiselle Bertang has received orders for unlimited credit upon the court of Spain; it is said she will clear not less than five or six thousand guineas. She is the first milliner in Europe; every year she sends
the

the fashions to all parts of the world. We went to a large room, where there were twenty girls at work.

'12th. Tomorrow commences *Semaine Sainte*. But this people could not exist if they had not some amusement or diversion; there will be a concert Spirituel every night, and the fête of Long-Champs occupies three days. A few years since, upon one of these days, there appeared one of the girls who dance at the opera in a carriage with servants; her whole equipage superior to any other present, or to the Queen's. The wheels of her carriage were washed with silver, and her horses were shod with silver. The next day the queen sent her word, if she ever appeared in such a manner again she should be taken care of. Whether this was not descending from the dignity we should suppose in the character of the Queen of France, I will not decide.'

Abby cannot encounter the fascinating Mrs. Bingham without indulging in a little psychoanalysis.

'14th. We had a large company to dine, the Marquis de la Fayette and lady, the Chevalier de la Luzerne, Mr. Brandson, the Dutch Ambassador Extraordinary, Mr. and Mrs. Bingham,' who, Abby feels that day, 'has a vivacity that is enchanting, but without much dignity; grace depends upon the person, and manners; dignity is placed in the mind; the latter she has not; she is nevertheless, a charming woman.'

'17th. Dined today at Dr. Franklin's; the whole company were Americans, except an old man, Monsieur Brillon, who is a friend of the Doctor's' — but was it not Madame Brillon who was the friend? — 'and who came as he said, "*a demander un diner a Père Franklin*." His wife, it is said, is one of the handsomest women in France. This man is perhaps 60 years old; his hair is white from age, but he is not venerable; he possesses neither wit or reason, but has a great propensity for talking, and from his manners, I suppose, thinks he has a natural turn for satire, when in reality he has no more than his horse. Reader, pardon the comparison; of the man I ask none.

'20th. Well might the Abbé Arnaud say that people in this country put their children into convents to keep them out of the influence of their own manners. Mrs. — told me last Monday, she was going to pass the eve with Madame la Marquise de Buillye,

Builleye, and added "I suppose I shall play cards there till the morning." She said she was there the last day of the Carnival, and stayed until two o'clock in the morning, then came away leaving the company at cards; she told me that the Marquis de B. went to bed, rose the next morning, went in full dress to pay his wife a visit, and found the company as he had left them! What a picture!

'She adds that there are five ladies and some gentlemen, who are of that particular party; they meet at each other's houses five nights in the week. They go to the play in the forepart of the evening, and after the play or opera is over, they meet. She said she knew a gentleman who was of all their parties, and that it was inconceivable the money he had lost this winter. These are the wives' parties. The husbands meet at their public clubs, and have gamed until it was prohibited by the king. The picture Swift has drawn of a fashionable lady, I now believe verily true in every iota; these are the people, and these the manners, that my father will not introduce us to; there are a few exceptions like the Marquis de la Fayette and family. I have heard the marquise say that she seldom went out except into her family connections. I suppose the true reason is that the company she would go into would be of this sort, and would not be agreeable to her. I have heard her express her disapprobation of gaming; even Mrs. Bingham is not so pleased with it as when she first arrived. As an American lady, she might always have excused herself from playing, if she had wished it, "but," she said, "I became fond of it, and have won sometimes twenty guineas of an evening."'

It seems that we are quite conservative about rouge to-day, for, Abby tells us: 'There is scarce a greater offense against delicacy, than to go into company with a *little* powder on your face; it is almost the criterion of indecency; but at the same time, a lady will put an ounce or two of rouge upon her face, and even think she is not dressed without it.

'Mr. Williams told me that when he first arrived in Paris, a friend of his accompanied him to dine with a lady of his acquaintance. The first thing that struck him was being introduced to the ladies' bed-chamber, which is here as usual as it is to visit. The lady was rather en dishabille, except her head which was
highly

highly dressed. After dining they returned again to the lady's bed-chamber; a gentleman in company took from the table an orange; while the rest were taking their coffee he was eating his orange and put the peel upon the side of the chimney piece. Sometime after he had gone the lady called her servant and inquired for this gentleman; the servant told her he had gone. She ordered her servant to go and request the gentleman to return. In less than an hour he returned, begging to know her commands, when she called her servant and ordered him to take the orange peel away. This, said Mr. W., completed my wonder and astonishment.

'When I dined at Dr. Franklin's last Thursday, I asked Mr. F. [Mr. William Temple Franklin] by whom I was seated at table, whether the image in the centre of it represented any particular device, as I observed a crown of laurel and some figures? He said "he believed it was Love and Hymen, an old fashioned idea. You know," said he; "they used to talk of such things in former times, but at present they know better." I told him I was surprised to find it at his table.' Isn't Abby becoming 'a little French'? 'He is strongly attached to the French. He told me he preferred an English lady who had acquired the graces of French manners. I believe he was here right; there is something not to be defined, that the French women possess, which, when it ornaments and adorns an English lady, forms something irresistibly charming.

'24th. Today it is, that the King and Queen wash the feet of twelve children; when all the princes of the blood serve the dinner, and the King and Queen tend them at table. The same ceremony is performed in the churches by the archbishop and priests. We went to St. Sulpice; what a spectacle did the Church present! Two hundred of the dirtiest creatures I ever beheld. The priests were in their robes, but shamefully dirty; a dozen little boys with purple jackets, and purple caps, their hair shaved; then followed six or eight black friars; they were parading the Church, singing their service. There were a number of persons at their devotions. There is nothing more surprising than the manner and form with which these people address the Supreme Being; we returned to Auteuil by the *grand route*, that we might have a view of the carriages at Long-Champs; it is
curious,'

curious,' Abby adds pensively, 'to observe how much more attended this was than the churches.'

The next day they went again to Longchamps, 'where there were the greatest collection of carriages that I have ever seen; none particularly elegant. There were great numbers on horseback; most of them ape the English in their dress and appearance. The beaux in this country aim very much at the English dress, as the English do the French; it is,' Abigail concludes delightfully, 'the particular aim of each to appear what they are not. When a Frenchman is in a great dishabille, he says he is *à l'Anglais*. After we had seen what there was to be seen, we went to take tea at Dr. Franklin's with Mrs. Hewson. Mr. Franklin is always sociable, and is very satirical in general. The Dr. is always silent, unless he has some diverting story to tell, of which he has a great collection. Mr. Franklin copies him in this. The Dr. has something so venerable in his appearance, that he inspires one with respect. I never saw an old man more so.

'27th. As we were sitting around the fire about 9 o'clock, we heard some guns, which we supposed were to announce the birth of a prince or princess. On Monday morning we were informed of the birth of a prince, whose title is Duke of Normandy.

'29th. Pappa went to Versailles, it being Ambassador's Day. The young Duke of Normandy received all the ambassadors and ministers, though only two days old; he was lying on a bed, attended by two or three ladies; if this had happened to have been a princess, she would have been scarce noted. As soon as a prince is born, he has a house, servant, carriages, horses, tutors, governesses, and every other attendant, while he, poor thing, is insensible to everything. . . . In a government such as this, where all power and authority is vested in the King, it is undoubtedly necessary that he should be respected from the moment he exists. . . .

'Yesterday Madame de la Fayette wrote a very polite card to mamma, informing her that the King would come today to the Church of Notre Dame to assist in the Te Deum, which would be sung to return thanks for the birth of the prince, and to offer us places in her father's tribune. We dined early and went. From the Barrier to Notre Dame I cannot attempt to describe the appearance; every street was so crowded that had it not
been

been for the police, which upon every public occasion are as numerous as the people, it would not have been possible for a carriage to have passed. Mr. Jefferson, who rode from the Marquis' with us, supposed there were as many people in the streets as there were in the State of Massachusetts. Every house was full, every window and door. The Church of Notre Dame is the most beautiful building I have seen. On one side of the chapel the judges were seated, dressed in crimson velvet robes and large wigs. On the other side the lawyers in black habits; their dress is much the same as in our country, except that they wear their hair long behind, without being tied, but waving, which is very graceful.

'On one side of the altar were a number of ladies of rank; on the other side, the ambassadors and public ministers. Before the altar and under a canopy, was a crimson velvet cushion; this was for his majesty to kneel upon. There were the bishops with the archbishop at their head, dressed in purple robes, with skirts of the richest lace, . . . and a number of others of a different order, dressed in cloaks wrought with gold. Among these was the Abbé de Bourbon, an illegitimate son of Louis 15th. He appeared to be about 27 years old, a very handsome man. I observed all the gentlemen of the court paid particular attention to him. Madame de la Fayette observed she thought it was too magnificent, that there was too much noise and bustle for the Church; she said it was not peaceful enough. I was charmed with her behavior to her company; the Marquis was with the King; she had to arrange the company when we went to Church, which she did, paying particular attention to every one. In the eve. the whole city of Paris was illuminated. Pappa was here at the first ceremony of this kind, when the first princess was born. The decorations at that time were superior to this.' Pappa had to keep up his reputation as first authority. 'It was impossible not to make many reflections upon this august and superb ceremony, but in this government I should judge it was necessary. If the man who has the whole kingdom at his disposal is not thought of next to their God, he will not long sustain his power. And however wrong it may be,' Abby concludes philosophically, 'it is unavoidable.'

'2d. Mrs. Hewson and Mr. Franklin came and drank tea
with

with us. We went in the eve to the Concert Spirituel' (just how spirituel, one wonders), 'which is open while the theatres are shut; it is somewhat *triste*. The music is called good. There is some part of all the vocal music that I have heard in this country, that sounds to my ear like overstraining the voice, and has upon me an unpleasant effect. I am told it is because I am not a connoisseur that it does not please me, for it is the height of perfection. That I am not a connoisseur is a truth,' Abby concedes readily, but, we feel unconvinced. 'I saw many things that would have appeared very strange, had I met with them a few months since. I am accustomed to many things at present, but I am not reconciled to them.' There is a saving salt of humor in Abby's disapprovals. General Armand, a volunteer in the Revolutionary army and a fellow guest at the Lafayettes' dinner-table, has balm for the homesick, for 'He speaks very highly of our state, and of Boston in particular; most foreigners give the preference to Boston to all parts of the United States, at least they tell us so; and why should we not believe them.' He observed that there was an ostentatious show of hospitality in the Southern States, but he found the reality in Boston. He went there a stranger and without money; many of the merchants loaned him money, upon his word only that he would repay it.

'The Marquis had ordered that the children should not be presented, supposing the attention paid to them, rather a compliment to him and his lady, than any pleasure the company could derive from their presence; but mamma requested that they might be introduced, and they came.

'7th. Today we had a small company to dine.' Mr. West's name heads the list. It was probably Benjamin, although Abby does not mention his art — so much admired by good King George, who must have been a better judge of music than of painting. 'He gains our good opinion daily as a man of sense.' 'Mrs. Hewson has been with Dr. Franklin all winter; she is a sensible woman. The Dr. addressed some of his philosophical letters to this lady. He boarded with her mother in England, and has continued to preserve a great esteem for Mrs. Hewson. Her manners are neither masculine nor affected; but she laughs too much to please me.

'The

'The Marquis de la Fayette, has received some letters from America, respecting a son of General Green's [the Colonel's General Greene], who is coming to France to be educated with the Marquis' son George. The Marquis says it is his intention to send his son, when he is fitted, to Harvard College. Col. Humphreys told him today' — with some of that lack of 'polish' lamented by Abigail — 'that he was not pleased that some of the principal people in America should send their children to France for their education. . . . When we came from the Marquis', where we had dined, as pappà had business with Mr. Jefferson, he went in the carriage with Mr. Williams and Mr. Short. Messieurs Jarvis and Randall went with mamma and myself. While the former was in a shop making some purchase, Mr. Randall and myself had some learned dissertation upon blushing, which arose from a girl passing by the carriage with a veil on, which are very common in the streets here, made of lawn, silk, or gauze, and worn instead of a hat or bonnet. The latter is a thing I never have seen in France. Mr. R. observed that the blush of innocence was a better veil. I said, there were few of those known in Paris. He inquired if they had any word in the French language expressive of innocence? There is not any other word but innocence, and it is almost without a use here. I said it (blushing) was a very painful sensation. I thought it a great advantage to be exempt from it; he was not of this opinion. Mr. Jefferson, who had been in the shop, came to the door of our carriage; Mr. R. told him of our conversation. Mr. Jefferson decided, not agreeably to my opinion or belief, that we never blushed but from consciousness of something wrong in what was said or done.' Was Mr. Jefferson teasing, or was he a precursor of Mr. Freud? 'I do not believe it,' Abby continues stoutly, 'a person so subject to blush as myself, should be interested in removing every idea of evil from it.' Then they 'went to Mr. Jefferson's, where I saw Miss Jefferson ['Patty'], a most amiable girl. Mr. J. has not dined out these four or five months. If he could discriminate, he would sometimes favor us with his company. From thence we went to see the abbés, and to take leave of them.' Abby is very sweet about the old abbés. 'I have not seen them since the death of the Abbé de Mably; they were cheerful, but their loss is great. I can truly say, that
in

in coming away from their house, I felt more regret in the prospect of leaving France than I ever have before; they are two such good old men that one feels for them the respect, veneration, and esteem that we should for a relation, who was thus advanced.'

They go next to call on Madame Helvetius, at the 'House of a Thousand Sofas,' as Franklin called it — also of seventeen cats.

'As we came home, we called upon Madame Helvetius, who has been sick. We were admitted, as it was to take leave. From the dining-room you enter a large salon, furnished in the French style; in the centre was a marble table, on which was a set of china, some images, and in the middle, a large circle with earth, a number of lilacs and other flowers, which resembled a little forest, and was very pretty. From this we were shown into the ladies' chamber, which is large and handsomely furnished. Madame Helvetius was sitting upon a settee covered up as a bed, quite at her ease; her dress was as usual . . . She was attended by the abbé and her doctor. Her great dog, which Mr. Franklin brought from England, was resting before her, and the lap-dog upon the settee; upon the table under a glass was a monument erected to the memory of her husband, over which hung his picture, which was very handsome. Madame H. appears to have been a very beautiful woman, when young. A French lady compared her to the ruins of Palmyra. . . . The Marquise de la Fayette, with her son and daughter, came out to tea. When Madame took leave of us, she saluted each, mamma and myself; lately she has taken this liberty, when meeting or parting. It is so much the custom, with the ladies of this country, that I believe they feel rather awkward to meet or part with those to whom it is unknown. The ladies kiss each other, and the gentlemen the same. It seems a curious custom to those who are not used to it.

'*May 10th.* Pappa went to Versailles today and took his leave of this court; he has been appointed to England. Mr. Jefferson succeeds him here.

'*11th.* According to the polite invitation of the Baron de Stael, Ambassador from Sweden; we dined with him today.' It was about a year later that the Baron married the plain Mademoiselle Necker. 'He is a very handsome man. . . . He received

ceived us at the door of the anti-chamber, and conducted us to another room, where he introduced us to a young Swede, a Baron, who had served two years in America in the French army. He spoke English surprisingly well. The dinner was studiously simple and elegant. It was served in plate... the knives, forks and spoons of gold.

'13th. This morning his grace the Duke of Dorset called upon my father, with a letter to the custom-house officer at Dover to permit us to pass unsearched. He has been very polite and friendly in his offers of any assistance in his power to offer, in a public or private character. He informed my father today that mamma and myself must be presented to the Queen. It was a point of etiquette not possible to be dispensed with; this I am very sorry to hear. It is an honor I wish to be released from. . . .

'15th. This morning before nine we were in our carriage on our way to Versailles.' The palace, Abby finds, 'The most elegant place I have seen since I have been in this country. There is a great deal of looking-glass in it, and painting upon the ceiling, which to my taste is the most improper place in a building to put paintings. The queen did not appear today.'

Evidently Abby had written to Eugenio, still tarrying in England, for advice on matters of court etiquette at Saint James's. In reply, he writes her this delightful letter:

'I write you this, Amelia, in answer to yours, No. 8, received a day or two ago, for which accept my thanks. I had really begun to think our correspondence had seen its best days, as you had suffered so long a time to pass without improving it. Now I hope other things . . . 'Tis the 24th of May, and I write you from *Woodford*, a mile or two beyond Epping-Forest. Here I have been some time, but return to London again to-morrow. The Spring in this country is delightful, and this is a most charming spot. . . . ' Here Eugenio relapses into contemporaneous verse. 'This is being quite romantic, you'll say. This is the season, Amelia, and here the place. But I quit these pretty scenes, to reply to your letter, and change as far as change can carry me — from hence to a court drawing-room.

'You ask my advice respecting the dress necessary at Court. . . . They tell me that the queen appears always in silk, and very plain, except on the king's birthday. The princesses, too, generally

erally appear in silk. The nobility dress variously. The last year muslin was much worn, worked with gold sprigs, flowers, &c., and may be worn this year also; 'tis worn over pink, lilac, and blue silk. The laces that are used are what the French term spring and summer laces, and I believe *point* is only worn in winter. But all join in telling me that you had not only better provide yourself in *every* common dress, laces, silks, &c., before you come here; but had also better make up a fashionable court dress, such as is worn at *Versailles*, which will just be the *ton* here; as fashions here are most all borrowed. This going to court will be very expensive. You must go upon all public days, and cannot appear twice or above twice, in the same suit. So you see the worst is not the presenting. This, to be sure, will be disagreeable, not, however, on account of being before their Majesties. You have too much good sense to be afraid of a king and queen. But the court all have their eyes upon one, and are apt to make their remarks, sometimes aloud. This is very unpleasant, especially where there are — and there will be many, I believe — ill-natured observers. I should like, however, to bear you company, were it only to see how the king would receive your father.

'To your papa and mamma you will not fail to present my best respects. I wrote him a few posts ago respecting his lodgings, and hope to have his instructions by today's post. I shall do my best to get him good accommodations. I hope you will inform me *dans quel endroit vous proposez vous descendre*, that I may be ready to receive you.

Adieu! mais sans adieu! Qu'il vous puisse arriver tout ce que vous pouvez desirer, avec un bon voyage!

'Yours,

'EUGENIO.'

Eugenio's letter finds Abigail in her last days in France which by this time — dirt, indecency, and deathless charm — has more or less entwined itself about Mrs. Adams's heart.

'Dear and delightful garden, how I shall regret your loss!' she exclaims.

January, 1785, brought Mr. Adams's formal appointment to the English court. By that time John Quincy had decided to return

return to America to study law at Harvard. From the day of his departure until their reunion three years later, this devoted sister and brother dispatched voluminous journals to each other across the Atlantic.

The correspondence begins immediately after the parting. John Quincy's second acknowledges Abby's first, received at the Port before he sails:

'Your letter I kept for the last. I will not attempt to express my sensations in reading it. Were I to tell you that a tear involuntarily started you would think I carried sentiment too far and that I am weak. That circumstance I will therefore keep to myself. . . .'

Later, at sea, he writes: '*July 14th*. Your birthday, consequently a jour de fête for me. I have thought of you still more today than I do commonly.'

After he is a student at Harvard his devotion is not less. 'This forenoon just as I was going to the lecture upon experimental philosophy, Mr. Storer gave me your letter. But only think how I was tantalized. I was obliged before I could read a line to go in and listen for an hour and a half to projectile motion and the central forces. I was so impatient that I lost half the lecture. As soon as I came out I did not wait, but walked to my chamber reading as I went.'

In those letters of a boy of eighteen to a sister of twenty, we find little of the pedantry of John Quincy Adams's later utterances, just the shrewd Adams humor, the intense, almost lover-like devotion to his sister, and the beginning of those elaborate character studies of any and all females who crossed his path. No woman-hater, John Quincy Adams! It would take an especial bibliography — and no thin volume at that — to record the pageant of fair ladies that passed before the virtuous and ever attentive eye of the future President. Appearance first — 'Her *person* answers all the expectations which had been raised by description. I will wait until I am more acquainted before giving my opinion of her *character*.' Of Sally Smith (a future sister-in-law), 'She has the ease and elegance of a French-woman without her loquacity. Her conversation, I am told, is as pleasing as her figure.'

Then there is Miss Peggy Wigglesworth, to whom a small
pamphlet

pamphlet of description is dedicated. Miss Emery, 'a young lady with an elegant person and (I am told) an amiable mind.' And unfortunate Miss Cazenau to whom he devotes dissective pages. From time to time he pauses to observe that 'Female beauty is so common a thing in America that I pay little attention to it.'

But we must leave young Mr. J. Q. Adams, as he then signed himself, analyzing tutors and young ladies at Cambridge, for a great deal is to happen to Abby before her brother sees her again.

CHAPTER XIV

ENTER COLONEL WILLIAM SMITH; EXIT ROYALL TYLER IN A BALLOON

THEY found London very crowded in May with the season in full swing, but finally secured lodgings in the Bath Hotel at the moderate price of 'a guinea a day for two rooms and two chambers.'

Although the Abigails had not yet met him, a young gentleman named William Stephens Smith had been appointed Secretary of the American Legation, and with gratifying military promptness had arrived in London, May 25th, the day before the Minister Plenipotentiary. He gave Baron Steuben an account of his arrival. He left Falmouth on the 19th in a post-chaise with four bays. '... I put up at the Pall Mall near the palace of St. James, thinking it best to strike at the highest peg at once. Mr. Adams, his Lady, and daughter arrived on the 26th. I waited on them immediately and was much pleased with the reception I met with. On the 27th we waited on Lord Carmarthon, Secretary of State and were received with great civility. ... He informed Mr. Adams that at the next levée he would do himself the honor of introducing him to his Majesty, and at the levée after that I would be presented, which was according to established forms.'

And the Colonel had found a comrade-at-arms in London. 'On the 28th I dined with Waddington in company with Miranda, who loves you and, I believe, is making fair weather with the court of Spain. We went together to the Royal Circus which, breaking up at ten, we took coach to Vauxhall.

'The 29th & 30th I spent my time chiefly with Mr. Adams ... accompanied the ladies to the evening amusements. ... On the first of June Mr. Adams was presented at Court and introduced to the King in his private closet.

'The evening of the fourth the Right Honorable, the Earl of Effingham¹ called and insisted upon my going with him to his
apartments,

¹ Lord Effingham resigned his commission in the British army rather than fight against the Colonists.

apartments, the request had the irresistible marks of sincerity and I accompanied him; he introduced me to his Lady and two or three friends. I found them fit company (as to politics) for an American secretary, and was entertained with their fire, but did not flash myself; on the fifth I introduced him to Mr. Adams.'

Abby's journal, as soon as it is unpacked, resumes the story of their experiences.

'*London, June 1st, 1785.* Today my father went with Lord Carmarthon to the Palace, where he found many gentlemen known to him before. Lord C. introduced him to his majesty, George III. Papa made his speech when he presented his letter; his majesty was affected and said, "Sir, your words have been so proper upon this occasion, that I cannot but say I am gratified that you are the man chosen to be the Minister."

'*June 4th.* The King's birthday, consequently there was a Levée at St. James. On this day their majesties speak to every person present. The King speaks first to the Foreign Ministers. He conversed a quarter of an hour with the Spanish Minister upon music, of which he said he was passionately fond, particularly of Handel, for he owed to him the greatest happiness of his life, and observed that Handel, had said of him when young, "that young man will preserve my music."

Mr. Adams found the intellectual tone of the English court much more to his taste than the light-headedness of France. 'My father observed that he had never heard any thing like the conversation at a court before. One of the Ambassadors who had attended at the French court 30 years, said, Monsieur, the king's brother, had asked every time he had been to court, which was generally every Tuesday, "have you come from Paris today?" and no other question.'

A paragraph in a letter from Mrs. Adams to Thomas Jefferson, written from the Bath Hotel June 6th, catches the attention: 'Mr. Smith (the secretary of the Legation) appears to be a modest worthy man, if I may judge from so short an acquaintance. I think we shall have much pleasure in our connection with him.'

Yes, staunch Abigail, and joy and pain and the bonds of birth and death, all of life that comes with those whom God hath joined together. Temperamentally there was much sympathy
between

between Mrs. John Adams and Colonel Smith. She was his friend through all, and unto the end.

Abby's first impression of that adventurous spirit into whose life her own was to be absorbed is not recorded in the journal, which seems at this time to have suffered an eclipse. The thrills of a London season, perhaps, or perhaps it was Colonel Smith. Certainly the journal never entirely recovered from that impact.

The Colonel, less reserved, reveals himself in his letters. He writes with warm affection to Steuben, alone and lonely after the Revolution.

'It gives me pain, my dear General and friend, to find you describing your solitary situation. If my finances would justify it and I could continue to flatter myself that my Society would be pleasing, you would never want a companion in amusement or a sincere friend to accompany you in retirement. But this cannot be unless I should write a sensible love letter and receive a favorable answer. . . . Miss Read is here and to the great astonishment of everyone of our acquaintance, Mr. Smith does not yet know the house which accommodates her. Neither, between you and me, does he think it worth his inquiry, or I believe ever will, but though I think we once might have been happy, I do not think so now. . . . My dear friend you need not fear I'll make another slip with her. . . . Give my love to North and tell him I've lived a very virtuous life since I left him. . . .'

There are disturbing sights too, for a stiff-backed young American in London, the levity of a fellow Cincinnati, for example. One evening he 'met Colonel Robinson of the Pennsylvania line at the theatre with the medal of the Cincinnati in his buttonhole, ridiculously sporting with a Cyprean Nymph.' But he has found congenial friends with whom to compare notes on the follies and foibles. 'Last evening laughed away three hours with Mrs. and Miss Adams.' That afternoon he was going to meet his late king.

'If you'll give me leave I'll ring for the barber and not attempt another sheet, for it's time for me to make myself handsome as I am to attend the levée and be introduced to George the third. Give my love to all you love — I dare not say Miss Duane.'

Upon his return from Court the Colonel tells Rufus King all about it. 'The King is very affable and seems to lengthen his
speeches

speeches in proportion to the station which the Gentlemen he addresses fills. By this System I found there were several smaller people in the room than myself; so much for U.S.

'There was a great deal of staring and I am confident if their eyes had been glasses your two friends would have been most horribly singed, and I should have been deprived of the opportunity of expressing my gratitude to you and Mr. Gerry for your friendship and protection; make my best respects to him. Remember me to all my friends *you know them*, but I must particularize the good ladies of your house. And as for Grace let her have her choice of a kiss or a bite from you for me.'

In the Colonel's next letter to Steuben we hear more of the engrossing Adams ladies, and of a meeting with the 'Traytor Arnold.'

'MY DEAR GENERAL —

'You must let me prattle to you if only in imagination, for even at this distance I can place you in a chair beside me and please myself in contemplating your benevolence and good humour, I take those amiable traits as the guidance of my youth and am frequently sensible of a glow of soul for your friendship and patronage.

'I closed the June letter and retired to make myself amiable, alias — to disguise myself like a gentleman. The plan I pursued for it was this: imprimis, my head was well dressed and frosted, as it is called here. I was superficially armed with modesty contained in the threads of a fine lead-colored Satinet Coat and small clothes and a white corded silk Tambour vest, a sparkling sword and an elegantly plain set of shoe buckles, point lace Ruffles -- a bag and one Shappeau, *Bra a la gauche*' — the Colonel's French was phonetic. 'In this trim, with servants in livery I moved to the Palace of St. James and was introduced to his Majesty. He was chatty and pleasant . . . passed on with a civil bow which I returned with great reverence. History, I believe, Sir, does not note a similar circumstance where the reign of a Sovereign comprehends the period of oppression, Revolt and the reception of representatives of his former subjects in character of Ministers plenipotentiary. To a mind capable of feeling, the scene must have been painful. After the levée I accompanied

accompanied the Countess of Effingham on a visit and introduced her to Mrs. and Miss Adams who, I assure you, Sir, are very fine. Mrs. A—— is a very sensible and discerning woman, and Miss is an amiable and sensible girl. I spent the remainder of the night with the Earl and Lord Sempell, both warm friends to the principles of the Revolution.

‘On the 16th I dined in the City with a number of merchants and in the evening accompanied Mrs. and Miss Adams to the theatre....’

‘On the 20th I dined with the great, and moved from the Royal Hotel to this Station where my rooms are very genteel and private, exactly large enough for the Baron Steuben and myself if ever he should visit this country.’

Benedict Arnold was then in London. ‘This day I attended a levée at the Palace and amongst the rest appeared the Traytor Arnold in full British Uniform as a General officer; he conversed with but one Gentleman and seemed to exert himself to hide the lines of a Traytor under the smiles of a Courtier. He did not remain long, but it was quite long enough to disgrace the assembly.

‘Mrs. Adams and Miss were presented at Court this day and behaved to a charm.’ It was the day in which wax portraits were in the making. ‘After Court I visited several of the foreign Ministers and called on the famous Mrs. White noted for her ability in taking striking likenesses in wax and for her enthusiasm in the cause of Liberty...’

‘On the 29th Col. Miranda, Walter Stewart, Wm. Hamilton, Mr. Chew of Philadelphia and the undersigned spent the day at The Star and Garter at Richmond Hill from which we had a most excellent view of the ascension of a balloon with a gentleman and a lady in it.’ So the feminine aviator is not a modern product.

On the 29th the Colonel ‘had dinner with Mr. Vaughn, Dr. Price and other grave characters. You know the old gentleman in Philadelphia, knowing him you know the whole family — philosophers all — every member of the family perfectly capable of rendering clear the ways of God to man. I was soon satisfied with their dinner and their chattibility and made my escape and went to Vauxhall with Miranda who, you know, lets
few

few matters pass without some pleasing and improving observations. . . .

Sunday the young American attaché went to church 'to hear Dr. Price. He is the most liberal Christian I ever met. I have taken him as my Father Confessor. Strolled around the garden of Kensington with Mrs. and Miss Adams.'

With Rufus King, who has heard less of the Miss Read case, the Colonel becomes more emotional about Miss Adams.

'I must repeat my most perfect approbation of the family I have the honor of being connected with. Mr. A. fully answers your and Mr. Jays account of him, & the ladies of his family do honor to this country. As for the young lady — "she is more than painters can express, or youthful poets fancy when they love." I attended them to the Queen's Drawing Room, and free from partiality assert that they were fully equal to any there — but this is treason in this Hemisphere.

'I wrote last week to your Brother laborer in the Vineyard of Liberty (Mr. Read) and if my friends can agree on the subject, I should have no objections to an enlargement of salary for reasons obvious as follows. When I was honored with the appointment it was the prevailing idea that I was to live with Mr. Adams, have rooms in his house, and drink of the same cup and eat of the same loaf. The allowance was suited to this arrangement, but this cannot with propriety take place. Mr. Adams has his family with him, and I have no right to expect it. He will find his allowance, let him be ever so economical, fall short at the end of the year; therefore I would not wish to be burdensome to him, and flatter myself from these considerations my friends will think with me as to the increase of pay, as the station is remarkably expensive, and requires a tolerable supply to keep in the circle which I would wish to for the credit of my country.

'I mean with Apulius to choose my allowance as I would my coat rather neat and a fit than too long or too full, for what ever exceeds convenience and moderation turns more to burthen than to use. I do not mean to make money by my station.'

We know all about what the Adams ladies wore at Court that day, that they 'behaved to a charm' and did honor to their country, for Abigail senior, who was not engaged in falling in love,

love, wrote about it to the — as we feel with Mary — undeserving Cranch sisters.

Mrs. Adams made her first appearance modestly attired in 'white lute string covered and full trimmed with white crape, festooned with lilac ribbon and mock point lace over a hoop of enormous extent; there is only a narrow train of about three yards in length' — paltry indeed — 'to the gown-waist, which is put in a ribbon upon the left side' — after all this outlay in length — 'the Queen only, having her train borne. Ruffle cuffs, treble lace ruffles, a very dress cap with long lappets, two white plumes and a blonde lace handkerchief.'

We think of this advanced, strong-fibered wife of John Adams as built in the heroic mould, but an old violet 'crape' gown of hers preserved in the Smithsonian Institute shows her to have been, like many of the world's charmers, a little woman, small and delicate of frame, as was also young Abigail Amelia.

On the day of the Presentation she writes with pardonable complacency: 'My head is dressed for St. James and in my opinion looks very tasty.'

While Abby's auburn locks are being powdered and dressed, Mrs. Adams sits down to describe her daughter's costume in detail to the cousins, so that Lucy and Betsy may startle Boston with its replica. Abby's gown is also white, 'the petticoat covered and drawn up in what are called festoons, with light wreaths of beautiful flowers: the sleeves, white crape drawn over the silk, with a row of lace round the sleeve near the shoulder, another halfway down the arm, and the third upon the top of the ruffle. A little flower stuck in between; a kind of hat-cap with three large feathers, and a bunch of flowers upon the hair. Thus equipped we go in our own carriage, and Mr. Adams with Colonel Smith in his.'

Picture young Abigail as in the Mather Brown portrait, only much more lovely, as she must have been from contemporaneous accounts. It is not difficult to imagine that final and complete damage was done to the Colonel's heart that day, and that sitting in his carriage beside good Mr. Adams, he must have made but absent replies to that shrewd gentleman's comments upon matters of pomp and politics.

We

We get more of the picture in reflection in a letter of John Quincy's, answering his sister's description:

'Your account of the presentation is sufficiently minute to make me attend you in my imagination through every step from the morning to the joyful instant when you went into your coach to return home; for if I am not mistaken, that was the most pleasing circumstance you met with in the course of the day. That the whole ceremony, as all those of courts are, was beyond measure ridiculous, is as true as that it was absolutely necessary for you to go through it. . . . As they are obliged to go through this drudgery so often, they might make the matter still more systematical, and never say but one thing, which they might repeat upon every occasion, and to everybody . . . by the way, you seem in your answer to have hit exactly the court style; a compliment, though at the expense of your real opinion, and I own you could not with propriety have given the preference to your own country upon that occasion.'

There was bitterness, too, at the court. It was too soon after the war for comfort. Long afterwards, writing to her daughter, at the time when England was threatened by the French, Mrs. Adams remarked: 'Humiliation for Charlotte is no sorrow for me. She richly deserves her full portion for the contempt and scorn which she took pains to discover.' But of the contempt which Charlotte 'discovered' for the Adams women, no word escaped their lips at the time.

Lucy and Betsy received many letters describing court gowns. Another time we hear that Mrs. Adams's head was adorned with 'two black and blue flat feathers which cost half a guinea apiece, but that you need not tell of; three pearl pins, bought for court, and a pair of ear-rings, the cost of them no matter what, no less than diamonds, however.' She imagines Lucy's comment, 'Full gay I think for my aunt!' True, Lucy, but nobody is old in Europe. The head of the Duchess of Bedford, aged seventy-six, had 'a cushion full of diamonds, for hair she has none, and a sack and coat of soft satin.'

Of George the Third the elder Abigail remarks cryptically to Sister Cranch: 'He has a certain countenance which you and I have often remarked' — evidently with disfavor — 'a red face and white eyebrows. The Queen has a similar countenance,

nance, and the numerous Royal Family confirm the observation. . . .

When it came Mrs. Adams's turn to be presented, she 'withdrew her right glove, and His Majesty saluted her left cheek.' The numerous young princesses she finds 'pretty rather than beautiful, . . . dressed in silver and black, with heads' full of diamond pins.' As for the ladies of the court, 'they are in general very plain, ill-shaped and ugly, but don't tell anybody that I say so.'

To Sister Shaw, the Intellectual, she describes her first sight of Mrs. Siddons, as being more to that lady's superior taste. 'She was interesting beyond any actress I had ever seen, but I lost much of the pleasure of the play from the sooty appearance of the Moor.'

Things do not change so much. We have our extortionate ticket brokers. In Mrs. Adams's day you 'had to make as much interest to get a box when she [Mrs. Siddons] plays as to get a place at court.' And to Thomas Jefferson, who played the violin, and was a lover of good music, she writes of going to a performance of Handel's 'Messiah': ' . . . sublime beyond description. I should sometimes have imagined myself among a higher order of beings if it had not been for a troublesome female who was unfortunately seated behind me, and whose volubility not all the powers of music could still.'

So down through the ages we have the Troublesome Female behind us, who, canary-like, competes with the music, though the morning stars sing together. Now for our young Abigail — oh, adorable picture!

'A small white Leghorn hat bound with pink satin ribbon, a steel buckle and band turned up at the side and confining a large pink bow; a wreath of full blown roses about the crown, another of buds and roses within the hat, the roses to the edge of the hair.' As for the gown it was of 'Chamberi gauze, the coat flounced with crape over a pink waist,' and much more of pink roses and pink ribbon.

Lucy and Betsy, too, despite their unworthy attempts to pry Royall Tyler away from Abby, are made happy with gifts from their generous, though by no means rich aunt — London gowns of blue and pink sarcenet, a fine soft silk much in vogue
at

at this period — no lutestring when you are making presents.

We can't care very much about the Cranch girls. Mary Tyler has prejudiced us against them. But we might pause here to remark that eventually they both married, though not Royall Tyler. Lucy became the wife of the blind musician, John Greenleaf, which, one hopes, through the 'exercise' of unselfishness, developed her higher nature.

And what of poor Royall Tyler, pursuing law with an aching heart in Boston? He seems destined to get into Father Adams's bad graces. The Cranch motive again steals up in the bass. The balloon furor strikes Boston, and Royall finds in it some mental distraction — who could grudge him that? But news of it reaches John Adams's ears in undesirable form. We feel that it was via Betsy.

Why Mr. Adams should regard balloon riding as symbolically indicative of lightness and irresponsibility is not clear. Had not Abby and the irreproachable John Quincy enjoyed that very same entertainment in the garden of the Tuileries not so long ago? Perhaps Mary only thought he thought so, an idea born of those dark hints let fall by Royall in moments of retrospective anguish (hand in coat-breast, brow bent).

Mary could never quite forgive Abby and the Adams family for Royall's rejection, which is delightfully illogical of Mary, for had Abby married Royall, where would she have been?

Perhaps it was the balloon that finished Royall Tyler, perhaps — much more probably — it was Colonel Smith. In any case, at the moment he is anticipating reunion, he receives instead his returned miniature and letters, also, we must admit, a most unfeeling note from his 'Amelia,' quoted by Mary Tyler, we presume from the original which poor Royall had bitterly treasured:

'SIR:

'Herewith you receive your letters and miniature with my desire that you return mine to Uncle Cranch and my hopes that you are as well satisfied with the affair as is

'A. A.'

Plymouth Rock can be very hard.

At the fateful moment when Abby gave the love tokens to
Charles

Charles Storer for personal delivery, her mother, perhaps unaware of the full extent of the damage done by Colonel Smith, intervened — 'Have you well considered what you are about, my daughter?' To which Abby replied — we can picture a slight toss of the head — 'Madame, I have well considered and am determined.'

Poor Royall Tyler! More 'tears of agony' when that cold little letter arrived, giving back his own rhapsodies of hope, longing and despair, and the little 'counterfeit,' once one of the dearest treasures of his inconstant love. Hope revived a little, even after that. But the final blow was not far off.

Meantime his unconscious supplanter is dispatching gay letters to America. This to his friend and comrade at arms, William North, Steuben's protégé fairly crackles with life:

'Will you never break yourself of it, Bill? Your letter I received last night. It is dated the *first* of May. "The Packet Sailing that day obliged you to make it shorter than you intended." Read the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, attend to the story of Ananias and Saphira and tremble at your situation, for that very letter was enclosed to me by that very Packet in a letter of the *fourth* from Daniel McCormick — for whom I request your prayers.'

The Colonel knew Baron Steuben's horses well. They were all his friends.

'I am sorry at the account you give of the stable windows being Broke. I hope the Mare was not hurt nor the better Horse (which is the Gray one) injured; and if the filly should have broke her wind at the assault I shall go distracted. Remember me to her. . . .

'I am glad to hear some of our friends are provided for in the Armada of the United States. . . .' But Jack, the Colonel's younger brother, seems to have preferred land service.

'Why do you Doubt Jack's acceptance? Why the Devil, Mr. North, did you not take a stick and lather him untill he promised you to March? For March he must, by God, or Toby is done with him. . . . Have you not been to the family, Bill, since I left you? Oh, you are a most incorrigible Vagabond, riding the Baron's Horses I suppose & glaring at Congress. . . .'

Bill also receives a picture of the Colonel's life.

'... I

'... I shall endeavor to live at Court without being a courtier. If I find it possible I'll inform you. I shall also endeavor to act like one who neither comes to acquire friends or fortune, but solely, strictly to discharge my duty to ye public, and with this pursuit, while I live with the modesty of a private Gentleman, never fail to support the dignity of my station. If you should find reports circulating contrary to this system, dont be hasty in giving them credit.

'I am, Mr. North, entered upon a very extensive & Gay theatre, the actors many, the Plott immense. I move with great caution lest I should stumble — I must confess I do not find that intoxication which I was led to expect.' But the Colonel, like Mrs. Adams, was enthralled by Handel's music. Literature — the best — and fine painting were no novelties in eighteenth-century America, great music was.

'I passed yesterday from nine to 4 at Westminster Abbey where there were upwards of three thousand of the best people of the Kingdom collected together with all the Royal family, which viewing them separate from the Glare which their position throws upon them, are really very fine. This gathering was to commemorate the existence of one Handel; the music consisted of upwards of 600 performers. I never in pursuit of amusement was so charmed and delighted.'

And he treats Bill to a vivid account of Vauxhall:

'This place is resorted to by people of all ranks from the Nobility to the meanest biped... they pay their shillings & enter in full chase of pleasure. They walk the Gardens & sup if they choose, are entertained with music & match themselves as if they were to enter an Ark... I have never overstayed eleven, but one & two are the Common hours. When I retired the Master told me there were Seven thousand then in the gardens, one third of which, I suppose, were females in pursuit of Amorous engagements. This would just suit you, Bill, for my part I philosophize.' The letter closes with a priceless mixture of Eighteenth Century ceremony and boyish intimacy, 'I am, Dear Bill, Your Sincere Friend and most obed't Humble Sev't —

W. S. SMITH'

CHAPTER XV

THE COLONEL TAKES A LOOK AT PRUSSIAN EFFICIENCY AND ABBY RETURNS TO HER JOURNAL

OTHER things than romance were brewing in the Colonel's mind that summer, though doubtless Abigail's charming face had a way of intervening between the neatly written pages of official foolscap. Had our young soldier been a poet in the style of his period, a sonnet to his lady's eyebrow, or a fervent ode beginning, 'Oh, Thou,' would probably have been found between the pages of some red-sealed packet in Mr. Jay's European post one morning. The Colonel's correspondence with the Minister of Foreign Affairs that year was voluminous and meaty.

It was a time of change and unrest. The American Revolution was still in the air and our Colonel, who has looked upon the Old World with the eyes of the New, ardently desires liberty and justice for all. Now, perhaps inspired by the seething Miranda (who borrowed money from him for the trip), he decides that he must meet the man who was at that time the mightiest figure in all Europe, Frederick the Great of Prussia, and, at the same time, examine his highly organized powerful military machine — the beginnings of Prussian efficiency. The Colonel had heard much of Frederick and his army from his friend Steuben, the king's former aide.

Colonel Smith's reactions to this experience are more than interesting — they are important. He was a man whose formative years had been spent on the battle-field, where resource, the habit of quick decision, action, had developed at the expense, perhaps, of forethought and the instinct of self-preservation. He was, essentially, the soldier, but he was also a thinker. Look at the face in the Stuart portrait. He had insight — seeing at a glance while others weighed and measured, although he did not lack that 'reflection' so highly prized by his generation.

And so one day, in the midsummer of 1785, when, as he observes to Mr. Jay, 'it is almost as much as a young Gentleman's character is worth to remain within view of the smokes of London,'

don,' Colonel Smith sat down to ask John Adams's consent to his project.

'LEICESTER FIELDS, *August 4th, 1785*

'DEAR SIR:

'The request I am going to make will perhaps at the first blush appear singular, if improper I shall ever acknowledge myself obliged by being candidly told so, and in it as well as in every other matter I will cheerfully give way to your superior judgment, and regulate my conduct by your advice as far as you think proper to honor me with it.

'If there is a probability of your Excellency's not having an occasion for me for some time, either for your private concerns or the business of your mission, I would request your permission to take a tour on the continent. A general review of the Prussian army takes place on the beginning of the next month' (the Kaiser's annual *Herbstparade*). 'This I should like to see, and if you approve of it, will set off in the course of the ensuing week.

'With the highest respect I am your Excellency's

'Most ob. hble: Servt —
'W. S. SMITH.'

'HIS EXCELLENCY, JOHN ADAMS.'

John Adams replies at once — we have a fleeting memory of the Frog and Fish footmen as we read these elegant formalities.

'GROSVENOR SQUARE, *August 5th, 1785*

'DEAR SIR:

'In answer to your letter of yesterday you will give me leave to say, that your assistance and advice has been at all times so useful and agreeable to me, that I should lose the advantage of it with reluctance if it were only for a few weeks or even days. Nevertheless, the month of August is so dull, and so disgusting and unwholesome in London, the place is so deserted by men of business as well as others, that I believe it will be the best time to take an excursion.

'The general review of the Prussian army is an object worthy of your ambition to see, and therefore I will cheerfully consent to your making the tour, and will only ask the favor of your return

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as soon as may be. I shall add a request that you would enquire in every city where you go concerning the prohibitions and duties which are imposed on our American commodities of all sorts, particularly tobacco and oil; and whether we cannot obtain markets where monopolies and exclusions are less idolized. You would do well to enquire, too, how the cities are illuminated, and what manufactures may be had, especially in Prussia, with whose Soverign we have just concluded an honorable treaty.

‘With great esteem I have the honor to be, Sir,

‘Your most obt, and most hble. Servt.

‘JOHN ADAMS.’

The Colonel’s letter to Frederick was not dispatched until he reached Berlin a month later:

‘BERLIN, 3d. September 1785

‘SIRE:

‘Your Majesty’s military fame and the reputation of your armies induced me to leave London early in August with an intention of being present at the reviews of your troops, at this city and at Potsdam.

‘I shall be happy if my intentions should meet with your Majesty’s approbation, and hope to be honored with your permission to attend them.

‘I am, Sire, with the highest respect,

‘Your Majesty’s most obt. hble: Servt.

‘(Signed) W. S. SMITH,

Colonel in the Service of the United States of America.

‘HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF PRUSSIA.’

Frederick’s brief reply comes promptly.

‘WM. LE COLONEL SMITH:

‘Je serai bien aise, de vous voir, aux manoeuvres d’ici, la permission que vous venez de demander pour y assister, vous est accordee; et je prie surce Dieu Wm. le Colonel Smith, qu’il vous ait en sa sainte et digne garde.

‘(Signed) FREDERIC

‘POTSDAM ce 4 de Septembre, 1785.’

So

So one morning in August, accompanied by the dark Miranda, 'Wm. le Colonel Smith' fares forth for the dominion of Frederick, which gives Abby time to resume that neglected journal. She writes a letter to him very soon after his departure, one of the few to escape destruction. It is a decorous communication, answering one of his posted *en route* to the Channel, but one may read a bit between the lines.

'LONDON, GROSVENOR SQUARE,
'Aug. 13, 1785

'DEAR SIR:

'Your letter from Harwich, dated August 10, reached me upon the 11th. We were very glad to hear of your arrival there, and continue to follow you with our good wishes.

'When you tendered me your services and asked my commands, I did not know you had any thoughts of returning by the way of Paris; otherwise I should have charged you with a few. I now write by Mr. Short, requesting your care of an article or two which Mr. Jefferson will be so good as to procure for me.

'Nothing new in the political world has taken place since you left us, but a fresh report by way of Minorca, that the Algerines had, upon the 13th of July, declared war against America. This I suppose is circulated now, in order to raise the insurance upon the few American vessels ready to sail. The report says that twelve of their ships are ordered to cruise in the Mediterranean for ours; but it will probably be so long before this letter will reach you, that what is news now, will not be so then.'

And she offers a rare assortment of introductions to the Colonel, including one to a 'delicate and modest single lady.' Either the delicate lady was not strong in personal beauty or Abby by this time felt very sure of her Colonel!

'I have taken the liberty, sir, of requesting Mr. Jefferson to introduce you to two gentlemen and ladies; the first of the gentlemen is much esteemed in the world for his patronage of the sciences, and for his knowledge and skill in music and poetry; and the other for his notable exploits and heroism. One of the ladies is of a very ancient and noble family; she is eminent for her wisdom, and exceedingly fond of all those in whom she dis-

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covers a genius and a taste for knowledge; the other is a single lady, remarkable for her delicacy and modesty. As there is some talk of their coming to London, they may possibly accompany you here. There will be no difficulty on account of the language, as they speak one as perfectly as they do the other.

'I had some idea of mentioning a young gentleman of my acquaintance, whose manners are very insinuating, but as he does not always conduct himself with the prudence I could wish, and is very fond of becoming intimate, his company sometimes proves dangerous; but Mr. Jefferson, who knows them all, will use his judgment, and upon that you may safely rely.

'I hope you will not travel so rapidly as to omit your journal, for I promise myself much entertainment from it upon your return. The family would join me in regards to you if they knew that I was writing; you will believe them your well wishers and friends, as well as your humble servant.

'A. ADAMS.'

Mr. Jefferson and Abby are corresponding quite regularly now. 'I beg you will present my compliments to Miss Adams,' he remarks at the end of a letter to Mrs. Adams. '*I have no secrets to communicate to her in cipher at present.*'

In the intermittent journal of this period, we find no mention of the Colonel's letters. Perhaps by now the emotions engendered by him were of that more direct and personal type that is less likely to find its way into a young lady's journal, which was, after all, more or less a thing to be loaned, or left on the drawing-room table.

'*August 26th.* Pappa invited Count Sarsefield to dine with him today. He was as usual in spirits and good company.' Evidently the most delicate female could regard alcoholic exhilaration with fortitude in that day. Also M. Barthelémy, the French Chargé d'Affaires, whom Abby found, 'civil, not gallant, sociable, not talkative, modest, not forward' — a contemporaneous fashion in characterization which she concludes languidly with, 'He is passing well. . . . Two other gentlemen dined with us; they were young men; and nothing passed in four hours to be related here.'

But Eugenio is in London. That is more interesting. When
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he calls, Abby does not 'resist' Mamma's command to go out with her, although it seems to have been her 'will' to stay at home. Eugenio, one feels, had a fighting chance before the Colonel came.

'27th. Eugenio came to breakfast. Mamma desired me to be dressed; she was going out to make some visits; I obeyed. I seldom resist commands, however my will may be for it. No, it is not pride, it is not vanity, which would prevent me, had I a will to follow, from making such visits, but I do not love that kind of intercourse where no one affection of the heart has any share. . . . We called upon my Lady Effingham, but she was not at home; returned home, dined alone; read Shakespeare after dinner. Pappa purchased his works this morning, upon my saying I had never read them.'

Abby's appreciation of Pappa is quaintly impersonal in its formality, an advanced attitude couched in eighteenth-century formula: 'I discover a thousand traits of softness, delicacy, and sensibility in this excellent man's character. Once I was taught to fear his virtues; happy am I that I find them rather to love. Grown up into life unknown to him, and ignorant of him, I had been taught to think him severe. I have found him far otherwise; he never demanded of me even an acquiescence to his wishes, but left me to follow my own in the most important concerns of life. How amiable, how respectable, how worthy of every token of my attention, has this conduct rendered a parent to whom we feel due even a resignation of our opinions! How many are there who usurp the power Nature has given them, and act rather as tyrants over their families than as parents of their children. . . .

'Today, agreeable to invitation, we went to dine with Dr. Jebb.¹ Had I never seen Mrs. Jebb, I believe I should have said upon entering the door, the lady of this house is a *politicianess*. There was an air through the whole that I thought discovered it. The company were all there when we went: Dr. Brokelsly, a moderate Englishman, great in his profession, and learned. A Mr. Ashley, a violent man, a prejudiced Englishman, no enemy to America I should suppose, but entirely ignorant of the arrangements

¹ Dr. Jebb, who gave learned lectures on the Greek Testament at Cambridge, was one of those Englishmen who espoused the American cause during the Revolution.

rangements there during the late war, as indeed every person here seems to be; they all attribute the want of success to their generals. If Sir William Howe had done so and so, you would never have gained your independence. I never pretend to understand politics, but I cannot but smile to hear these people talk. This gentleman was also a most violent enemy to the French; he was sometimes so violent that I did not know where it would end. Pappa endeavored to be silent, but sometimes he would get warmed, and who could avoid it, to hear so much ignorance and error asserted as truth?

'September 2d. Mrs. Smith from Clapham, and Miss B. called upon us. Mamma was dressing, so I had to appear. Miss B. began to question me, as to what country I liked best, France or England? I would not give a preference. "But you undoubtedly prefer England to America?" "I must indeed confess, Miss, that I do not at present." Was it possible! I acknowledged the excellencies of this country. There was more to please and gratify the senses; but I had formed such friendships and attachments in America, as would ever render it dear to me. "But surely, the culture is carried to a much greater degree of perfection here than in America." "Granted." "And you must," said Miss B. very pertly, "find a great difference between America and this country?" "In what, pray, Miss?" said I. "Why in the general appearance, in the people, their manners, customs, behavior, in everything." "Indeed," said I, "I do not; there is so great a similarity in the manners of the people in the two countries, that I should take them for one. If any thing I find a greater degree of politeness and civility in America. And the lower class of people in America, are infinitely superior to the lower class of people here." Their astonishment was great. — Was it possible I could think so? . . . Dr. Bancroft came in, and passed an hour.'

Then they had some conversation about 'the portraits.' Pappa was always sitting for some one; Gilbert Stuart alone painted six of him, although he had not begun yet. Perhaps Copley's versions of Abby and John were among those discussed. 'Pappa was not at all content with his own, yet he thought it the best that had ever been taken of him. No one had yet caught his character.'

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It was a trifle difficult to live up to Pappa's ideas of himself. 'The ruling principles in his moral character, were candor, probity, and decision.' Abby is very loyal. 'I think he discovered more knowledge of himself than usually falls to the lot of man; for, from my own observation, I think these are characteristics of him; and I add another, which is sensibility.

'28th. Mamma and myself went to make some visits this morning; a formal one to Madam de Pinto, lady to the minister from Portugal; but it would have been very uncivil in her to have been at home; so we left our cards. You may visit people and they you, for ages, in the fashionable way, and never see or know each other. It is a custom I do not like; I should prefer to see every one who paid me the compliment of a visit; . . . I would encourage an acquaintance with persons of every nation, and form opinions from real knowledge of them. . . . Strangers in this country are rather avoided than treated with any particular attention. In France persons are paid more attention to than here, from the circumstance of their being strangers in the land.

'30th. Today my father had invited all the foreign ministers to dine with him. The turtle presented by Capt. Hay will serve for a part of the entertainment, and make a figure. . . . Mamma and myself, as it is not the custom for ladies to dine with such a particular company, went and passed the day with Mrs. Rodgers. We returned at nine o'clock; the gentlemen were not all gone, but we did not see them; they seemed to be perfectly satisfied with their entertainment. Lord Carmarthon told pappa that he should have been very happy to have dined with the ladies.'

Acutely sensitive just now to the pangs of parted lovers, Abby devotes pages of the journal to the sufferings of Mr. Randall.

'Oct. 3d. Yesterday, it being determined by my father and Col. Franks that some person, in whom confidence might be placed, must go with Mr. Lamb to Algiers, Col. Franks proposed the matter to Mr. Randall under injunctions of secrecy. But, alas! we knew not what sacrifices he must make to accept. It seems his visit to this country was to renew an attachment formed with a young lady, Miss W., whose father left America

as

as a refugee, and he was soon to be married to her. My father advised him to acquaint the father of the lady with the matter, and the lady also.' Mr. Adams, accustomed to Spartan women, feels sure that Mr. Randall's innamorata will put patriotism first, but Colonel Franks callously prophesies that while Mr. Randall is sacrificing love to duty the young lady will 'give him the slip.' 'Colonel Franks,' Abby remarks, 'does not discover the delicacy of sentiment, which, if I mistake not, is characteristic of Mr. Randall. . . . Mamma and myself went out to purchase a set of table linen for Mr. Jefferson, and gave for a tablecloth five yards long, two and a half wide, with eighteen napkins, seven pounds sterling. A Frenchman, who is writing a history of the American war, often comes to read it to my father. I think the situation of authors who have not much reputation, would be very painful, did they not possess a sufficient show of vanity to support and blind them.'

4th. Today we had a large company to dine, Dr. and Mrs. Jebb, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Hay, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Jay — Mrs. Jay was prevented by indisposition — Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton. Mrs. Hamilton is a very pretty, agreeable girl. . . . The company seemed very well pleased with each other, and at table were very sociable. They went away about 9. Mr. Barthélémy called and sat an hour; he is the least like a Frenchman of any countryman of his that I have seen; does not appear to be possessed of the least of that kind of gallantry which is characteristic of his nation; I do not think him the less estimable for that, but he is wanting in that ease that generally attends a Frenchman. He does not or will not speak English. I suppose the latter, for I observe he understands what is said perfectly.

'Dr. Jeffries' (of the balloon) 'dined with us, and we went to the play in the eve. through the courtesy of Mr. Hamilton, who had taken a box. Their majesties and the princess royal and Augusta were present. The play was *The West Indian*, by their majesties command. The celebrated Mrs. Abington performed the part of Miss Rushpert. It was wretchedly performed. A character which has so much feeling, sentiment and delicacy, was represented as void of either. The entertainment was "*The Rehearsal*," a very stupid piece. Their majesties showed their taste, as it was the result of their command.

7th.

'7th. Mr. Jennings, a native of America, dined with us, he is a singular character. One could not have heard more scandal had they been in a circle of fashionable ladies, who consider the reputation of their friends proper subjects for them to display their candor, good-will and wit upon.

'A member of Parliament, conversing upon American affairs, at Stockdale's' (much talk, good and otherwise, passed at that fashionable bookseller's) 'said: "I hear Mr. Adams gives good dinners." "I dare say he does," answered Stockdale, "and would give you a dinner if you would visit him." "Ah," said the gentleman, "I am glad to hear it; for I thought they were starving like the rest of his countrymen." *Query*: Would it not be for the reputation of America were Congress to give their ministers a salary sufficient to support himself and family, without putting it into the power of these people to make such observations?

'November 3d. We attended the drawing-room for the third time. At two o'clock we went, and were in season. Their majesties came about three; the Prince of Wales, the Princess Royal and Princess Augusta accompanied them. There were present more handsome women than I had seen before. Lady Stormont is the handsomest woman I have seen in Europe. Her air and manner were graceful, dignified, modest, and charming. The king, queen, and prince had a great deal to say to her, particularly the latter.' Of the future George IV she adds, 'He is, I think, a handsome man. Of the princesses, I am most pleased with the person, and deportment of the Princess Royal; there is dignity, grace, and affability, with a certain degree of steadiness which I like, in her manners. We returned home at five. I wrote for my father.' It would seem that the Colonel's capacity for prolonged study of Prussian armament has begun to get on Abby's nerves, for she adds suddenly, 'I think the Secretary must be out of his senses to remain so long from his duty.'

'18th. This morning Governor Pownall called upon my father. He has lately returned from the south of France. He congratulated me upon being in England, hoped I preferred London to Paris. I answered him that I liked London very well. "I am glad to hear it," said he; "you ought to, for I have been inquiring, and I find they like you very well." The
governor

governor said he had found a very fine country in France; with a better religion and government, he should think it one of the best in the world. Said he, "We stay at home here, and think there is no country but this, but I am convinced to the contrary."

And now Abby meets some future in-laws without suspecting it — a name destined to become very dear to her and that absent inspector of armament.

'20th. Today we dined at Mr. B. Vaughn's, where we met several gentlemen and ladies, all French or West India Americans. A Mr. De Wint and daughter, who have lived many years in Holland. The young lady was quite French in her manners and dress; she spoke English very well. I am more and more partial to the manners of the French, particularly the women. As far as manners, and the first impression goes, they are certainly what we call better bred. . . .

'28th. Mamma and myself called in the morning at Mrs. Elworthy's, where we found some letters, and learnt that a ship had arrived from Boston. Returned home and found papa buried in letters. I found two from my brother, which gave me great pleasure. His happiness seems to be complete, except when he recollects that he has three of his dearest and best friends absent. Horrid life! Wretched state! thus to be deprived of the most pleasing part of society. . . .

'Count Sarsefield, Mr. Barthélémy and Mr. D'Aragon came in. They had been to dine with the famous Mademoiselle D'Eon,² whose character although not great is at least extraordinary. She has been known ever since she was a child to wear the habit of the other sex, and served as chargé d'affaires of France to this court, and afterwards as ambassador. She has been in several battles, and has fought two or more duels on the part of some ladies. She has written thirteen quarto volumes. One may venture, without having looked into the books, to decide against them. She obtained the cross of St. Louis. I do not know by what means she was discovered, but she now dresses

² Abigail repeats the common belief of the time, although, as was subsequently proven, D'Eon was in reality a man, a diplomat and spy, compelled for several years, for political reasons and in order to preserve a state secret, to lay claim to the feminine sex.

dresses as her own sex, although these gentlemen observed, that she might pass unnoticed as a man, yet as a woman she must appear singular to everyone. . . .

'December 11th. We called upon Mrs. Jebb, where mamma, the Doctor, and Mrs. Jebb, had such a dish of politics as suited all their tastes. The Doctor is very much interested in America, and solicitous for her welfare; Mrs. Jebb is very earnest and equally anxious. I am diverted when she makes inquiries of me, about politics, who never thought, or talked of them in my life; she does not find me very intelligent on the subject, consequently she will not have a very high opinion of me, I suppose; and I do not find that my happiness is in any way dependent upon that.'

It appears that Colonel Humphreys was rather a rough diamond. Abby seems always to be struggling between her regard for the soldier, and a certain distaste for the man.

'14th. My father presented Col. H—— at court today. He seemed to think his majesty, George the Third, much like the rest of the world. How much time it is necessary to spend in trifles, yet I do not know why one trifle is not as important as another, and I begin to think our whole lives are nothing else. . . . I have daily more and more reason to observe the very great importance of early education. If this is not attended to, you see a man's whole life stained and spoiled by habits and customs, which bear some resemblance to vulgarity. Col. H. is one instance of this. I will not draw a comparison between him and his friend,' (Colonel Smith) — 'although the advantage would be on the side I wish; yet the former has many excellencies.'

Abby's hints are very delicate. But a letter from the Colonel to Jefferson discloses some startling details. There is a disarming innocence in Mr. Humphrey's patriotism, but Mr. Jefferson seems to have suffered in his character of host. 'I think you'll never again see him at your breakfast table with his blue & white & red surtout.' The Colonel explains how he has tried to enlighten 'without alarming his pride,' for good Mr. Humphrey had 'a boundless appetite and too hasty a mode of satisfying it. Nothing but the loss of his teeth will rectify that,' and the Colonel fears that 'he could not pull them without mortifying explanations.'

explanations.' Yet it was Humphreys, not Colonel Smith, who was afterwards made American minister to Spain and Portugal.

'18th. M. Houdon, the sculptor, who has been employed by the state of Virginia to make a statue of General Washington, and who went to America with Dr. Franklin for the purpose, returned yesterday, and came to deliver a packet from Mr. Jay to my father. He is a Frenchman, and carries strong marks of national character in his eyes. . . .'

A month before, Eugenio, who had been obliged to return in some haste to America, writes to 'Amelia' from New York — a letter suggesting a suspicion on his part that his day is over.

'My word I mean always to keep, Amelia, so I write you from this place, though my letter may be barren of subjects to interest you.

'Seven long weeks were we upon the ocean, yet one week ashore quite effaced past trouble; so soon are our griefs forgot when their object ceases to be present; not so with our friends, Amelia. The sweetest ingredient of happiness is the esteem we bear them, nor can absence or distance, pain or sorrow, deprive us of it. . . . Peace and happiness be with you. Remember Eugenio, and be assured in so doing you add much to his happiness. . . .

'Perhaps you little think, that you are much the subject of conversation here. There are many ladies who envy you your present situation. "Is not Miss A. very handsome?" says one. Yes, Madame, she is called the American beauty. "She must be very accomplished; she has every opportunity, the best of masters; the best of everything." Ah! Amelia, I could not say much on the score of masters; but such qualifications of the mind and heart, as I knew you possessed, and which are the best accomplishments, them I assured the many inquirers Miss A. was eminent for. . . . Going abroad, I find, gives one some consequence. When you return you must prepare to be looked up to as a pattern for everything. I advise you now, then, to learn a little assurance, that reliance on yourself that can only make you independent of others. But I beg pardon for dictating to you thus.

'A Preliminary, Amelia, though at the close of my letter. There is a certain gentleman in your family, who I imagine, may

may be inquisitive in regard to our correspondence; my request is — but without telling him so — that he be not permitted to know what I write.'

It might have gratified Eugenio to know that that 'certain gentleman' — whose identity it would not require a Sherlock Holmes to suspect — was not about at the moment to speculate jealously concerning Amelia's correspondence.

Eugenio writes again very shortly, this time from Boston:

'I cannot but regret that the winds hurried me so soon from England. But weigh the matter, says prudence. The office was important, the task arduous, and very much expected from it. Had I failed, what an everlasting blot. As it is, to use a common expression, I save my credit and bacon too; and have only to acknowledge myself obliged by your interest in my behalf, and your good opinion. I have written your papa about Lambe, who from all accounts is an unworthy character. I wish he may not do more hurt than good.

'Surely Monsieur le Baron would regret your absence, and so I suppose would all the foreigners of the diplomatic circle, who dined with your papa, on the day of Feasts; for I believe, in France, *Madame la femme du ministre* presides at the table. England, you know, was never remarked for politeness. But you do not say where you dined; whether in the housekeeper's room, or in your own chamber. I have heard, however, that you spent the day with Mrs. Hay, to whom I beg my compliments. That you miss me, Amelia, I can well suppose, particularly as Colonel Smith was not returned. But how you can think this a mortifying circumstance, I am at a loss to find out. Did I not use to execute your commissions, and especially when you were with me, with such pleasure? You saw *The West Indian* performed; a good piece 'tis called. I wish I had been with you. I hope you had not *Gretna Green* again for the Farce. And you saw their majesties, and the two eldest princesses. Were you near enough to be recollected by them? Apropos, methinks I see you making your reverence to them. The fashionable courtesy, you know, is very low and slow. Have you learnt to make it gracefully? I ask because I want you to teach it here when you return; they make such little bobs and dodges as would make you laugh most heartily. Miss Grant,

Grant, sister to Betsy G., who was here some years ago, is here from England. I introduced Maria to her; of course there were courtesies on both sides. Miss G. prepared her feet; Maria made a little bob; Miss G. began to sink; Maria bobbed up again; Miss G. continued to sink; Maria made another bob; Miss G. was stationary; Maria bobbed again; making in the whole, about six bobs or dodges. Paint it now to yourself, Amelia, and add thereto how prettily the dodger must feel.

‘Why do you neglect your old friends, Amelia? Mrs. Russell, whom I love, and you too, I believe, says you promised to remember her, and to write; but that she has not received one line from you since you left this country; nor can she learn that you have once mentioned her to anyone: she is a worthy woman; don’t forget her, nor especially,

‘EUGENIO.’

CHAPTER XVI

THE COLONEL MEETS THE GREAT FREDERICK AND WRITES AN ENCYCLOPEDIA TO MR. JAY

ON his return to London, Colonel Smith writes the results of his journey to John Jay. It is surprising how many policies adopted long afterwards by our Government germinated in the mind of this young officer — the value to the United States of the Louisiana Purchase, not accomplished until eighteen years afterwards; the value of commercial alliances with South America and other elements of the Monroe Doctrine. Doubtless Mr. Jay was indebted to Colonel Smith for many points in his European treaty ratified nine years later.

‘WESTMINSTER, LEICESTER SQUARE
LONDON, *Dec. 6th*, 1785

‘SIR:

‘In the beginning of August, and during the recess of the British Parliament, when it is almost as much as a young Gentleman’s character is worth to remain within view of the smokes of the city of London, I determined to make a tour of the continent for political observation and improvement, and at the same time I supposed it would not be impolitic or improper for the Secretary of that Legation (as he wears a sword devoted to his Country’s service) to take a public military lesson in the Prussian camp, where all the blood-thirsty characters of Europe were bending their course. Upon these principles I wrote a letter to Mr. Adams requesting his permission. . . . After possessing myself of . . . the plans of those with whom we have some connection (in the Bank way) in The Hague and Amsterdam, of which I gave Mr. Adams immediate information, I entered the Kingdom of Prussia. . . . I was particularly pleased in forming a slight acquaintance with Prince Ferdinand (the Minden hero) who is amiable and pleasant. He was very inquisitive about America, and what is rather singular, considering that he has always moved under the wing of despotism, he professes himself a friend to the principles which governed us in the Revolution. After
being

being fully informed on those subjects, he exclaimed, "My God, what have my friends, the Britons, lost! Your country, Sir, presents a scene without a precedent, . . . may you succeed in the establishment of what you have so nobly contended for."

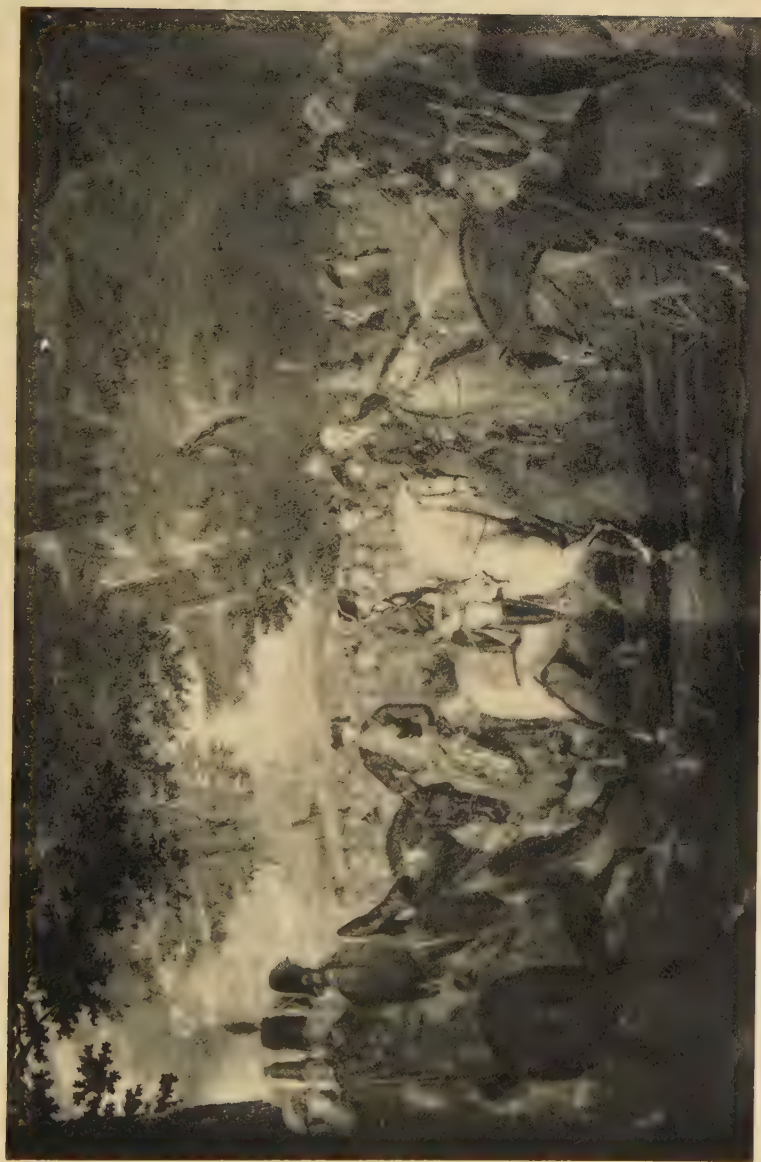
'From this, after examining garrisons, arsenals, bastiles, and noting the effects of despotism from the cottage of the impoverished peasant to the throne of majesty, I found myself in Berlin, and learning His Majesty expected that foreigners who proposed making any stay in his dominions, would inform him of their ostensible plans, I wrote a letter of which N. 3, is a copy, and was honored with the answer N. 4. I spent a month in his camp, and associated with his court and the first military characters in Europe assembled in his palace.' And legend has it that our Colonel received urgent invitation, feminine, to remain.

He made, indeed, a decided impression at the Prussian court. His formal dignity, his informal charm, his military enthusiasm, the link of Steuben's friendship all combined to please and interest the great king who ordered his court painter to perpetuate the Colonel's visit on canvas.

'As a soldier I am sensible of receiving material information and improvement, though I hope my country may never have occasion for me in that line. As a politician I have made some observations which must enable me more fully to discharge my duty to my country . . . After the reviews of Berlin and Potsdam were finished, I visited Leipsick, Dresden and Prague, made some stay at Vienna, the residence of the imperial court; and called at Paris on my way to London. In this tour of serious study and reflection, I have not only possessed myself of their military systems, and the improvements in their arms, but gained some knowledge of their political views and situations. . . . I will not prostitute the term of liberty when speaking of any of them.

'On examining the state of the only power in Europe which boasts of a liberal establishment, viz. the Netherlands, I found them reduced to the last stage of a political consumption. It is perhaps sufficient to know that they are governed by systems [the Austrian domination] diametrically opposite to their original establishments, and that, of course, revolutions may be looked for.'

But



FREDERICK THE GREAT RETURNING TO SANS-SOUCI AFTER THE MANEUVERS AT POTSDAM IN
SEPTEMBER, 1785

Colonel William Smith is seen just above the arched neck of the King's horse



But among the literati the Colonel finds vision. 'It is with particular satisfaction I notice the anxiety of the literati in the different courts I have visited relative to America. They alone, Sir, are anxious for our prosperity, and with particular satisfaction attended to me, while I endeavored to place in its proper light the false assertions in British publications. The nation feels itself lessened in the eyes of Europe in consequence of their conduct and situation with America, and too many individuals are laboring to establish a belief that we are now suing for their protection and alliance; that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that at this moment our country is a scene of anarchy, confusion and bloodshed. A paragraph appeared in a Berlin paper containing nearly those very expressions while I was there. I was immediately visited on the subject.' Toward the end of this peroration the young American Eagle screams a bit, yet there is savor in the Colonel's eloquence. 'I observed to the gentlemen that that wisdom which had conducted a young country safely through a vigorous war of eight years against the first power in Europe, and had been able, in the rage of war, to form Constitutions for themselves and treaties with other nations by no means inconsistent or dishonorable, would at least be capable of making establishments of their own internal government; that America considered herself happily situated out of the vortex of European politics; that the Ambassadors sent to the different courts were not sent to ask favors or to seek protection; that they felt themselves happy in possessing a country abundantly sufficient of furnishing its inhabitants not only with the necessaries of life; . . . that an European connection was by no means necessary to their existence, but the genius of the people, pointing to commerce, had led their representatives to enquire whether establishments might not be made with other powers, on which a friendly intercourse might take place; that with respect to the wished-for protection of the British Court, the idea was rather laughable than otherwise. As for Americans, they always lamented her infatuation, and pitied, at the very moment they were punishing, her folly; but as a nation once highly respected, and at present the nursery of the arts and sciences, we conceived it a duty we owed to mankind, and to ourselves, to bury former injuries in oblivion, and to extend the hand of friendship,

ship, with the dignity becoming a people, to support her in her old days; that if they would permit their reason instead of their passions to operate, such establishments might be made as would materially benefit *both*. But if, on the other hand, they should not be capable of treating as they ought the proffered friendship, all America had to do was to step so far out of the way as not to be injured by the rapidity of that fall which would inevitably take place. For though by a connection both might be benefitted, by a separation only *one* could be materially injured.'

It seems absurd to us to-day, but at the close of the Revolution it was generally believed, both in England and on the Continent, that the loss of the American colonies would entail the ruin of the British Empire. 'Only a few far-seeing economists,' says John Fiske, 'were wise enough to escape this fallacy. It was not then understood that English Britain and English America were bound together by commercial and social ties so strong that no question of political union or severance could permanently affect them.'

'You may readily suppose, Sir,' the Colonel continues, 'that it gave me exquisite pain to find the character of my country so traduced.'

But he finds his own Government also to blame. 'How much superior,' he exclaims, 'should we have been if the laws passed during the heat of the contest, had, upon the restoration of public tranquility, been weighed in the scale of reason, to have examined where they were marked with justice and where with passion. That character can now be only established by acts of positive virtue, which, according to the opinion I have of the human mind, I imagine will prove but an ant-hill piece of business.'

In Frederick the Great, he finds 'the character of the great king and the grand merchant strangely blended. He is the monopolizer of every article of commerce in his dominions, and farms them out to those who will give the most for exclusive privileges; and if he finds (as sometimes is the case) that he is outdone in a bargain, he breaks it without hesitation, and there is no redress, for the king can do no wrong. Hence arises a proverb much in vogue — when a merchant makes a bad bargain, they

they say he has had negotiations with the king. In short, Sir, he is made up of extremes, and it is impossible to know on what grounds to find him. He sometimes tarnishes the most elegant offers of a great soul by a paltry action; and at the same time that his memory will be blasted with the just appellation of a tyrant, the faithful historian will record acts of grandeur, benevolence and generosity which must proceed from an extraordinary elevation of mind, and a possession of those feelings and sentiments which do honor to the human heart. These are the singular outlines of that astonishing character which has for this half a century been the terror of Europe. No foreign manufactures are admitted, and there is not cash enough in the country (except in the royal coffers, which at this day contain one hundred million of dollars) to give in exchange for the produce of others. The emperor himself [of Germany], who is held up as the present model of royal virtues, and who seems to study more the happiness of his people than any other (except the present elector of Saxony) has made similar arrangements, and has lately seized all foreign goods, and obliges the merchant to dispose of them by retail only, and in such places as he has appointed. The present policies of the Court of Versailles and London seem tending to the same point, and I am somewhat apprehensive that no establishments can at present be made with them but such as will tend to increase our debts. . . . They plume themselves on the ability of commanding our markets, and from our real or imaginary wants set their own prices on our produce. It would be fortunate for us if specie might be obtained in the first instance for that produce. The ability of commanding would then rest with us, and the still more pleasing one of discharging the pecuniary obligations we at present labor under; and we should then cease to be the sport of speculators, usurers and bankers.

‘I see the prevailing passion in our country is for foreign establishments; seeking information, I ask why? If we look back to our situation in the most flourishing periods of our commerce we shall find that the great channel of our wealth at that period is at present unattended to, although the very first interference with it under the administration of Granville laid the foundation of the war between America and Great Britain.

‘If

‘If then in the period of our greatest commercial splendor (which I believe may be justly fixed between the conclusion of the last war and the existence of the Stamp Act) the main spring of our ability to support our commerce originated from a connection (though clandestine) with Savanna and the Spanish coast, and if our increasing wealth derived through that channel first sounded the alarm in Europe and put them on measures to interrupt our rapid rising importance, why is not the attention of our politicians directed to the same point? . . . It appears to me that we should be now making arrangements for an intercourse between the Northern and Southern continents; . . . countries collectively possessed of an ability of almost commanding the commerce of the universe.’ There we perceive traces of much post-chaise and inn-fireside conversation with his Venezuelan traveling companion. ‘. . . I have great reason to believe that the powers of Europe are in general pleasing themselves with the expectation that we shall not be able to support our governments; but, like the ancient Grecian republics, shall fall a prey to some ambitious prince. And they fix their eyes on George the Third who, like Philip of Macedon, they suppose will have address enough to sow dissensions amongst us. Can my countrymen bear the idea? . . . On the other side we have a party — they are small but valuable — it is composed of men of science and philosophers who look up to our country as the theatre of liberty and the only asylum now left for the injured and oppressed. God grant they may not be deceived. . . . If we believe that societies as individuals have their rise, their zenith and decline, why may we not suppose Europe in general as on the last, and America just entering on the first stage, and make our arrangements to keep pace with the rapid growth of youth? But now for particulars’: — the Miranda motive again, rather in the treble. ‘From what I can collect, the inhabitants of South America begin to feel uneasy and look around for liberation from the Spanish yoke, and perhaps will take advantage of the first European commotion and try their strength; provided they can meet with the countenance and protection of a naval power — for no other can rid them.’

And the Colonel would apply military tactics to political strategy.

‘With

‘With respect to Europe, the present convulsed state of their politics must, I think, so perfectly command the attention of the respective courts that a system may be formed, and measures taken by us before they know a sufficiency of it to counteract our plan. At the same time it will require some address to guard against the possibility of being (as a government) drawn in, when the appeal shall be made to the “*ultima ration regum.*” Holland is wrecked with internal commotion. Great Britain is distracted with party and almost incapable of pursuing any regular system. The sly policy of the Court of Versailles is busy with both; and the active ambition of the present Emperor of Germany, jealous of the Prussian power, and anxious to recover what the enterprising genius of Frederick has deprived him of, furnishes a strong line in the picture I am holding up, at the same time that he finds himself under the necessity of keeping a watchful eye over the Hungarians, who complain of an infringement of their rights. One of their noblemen in conversation with me at Vienna, speaking of America, asked several questions about Mr. Paine (whose pamphlets he was possessed of). He wrought himself up to a very considerable pitch and exclaimed “I wish to God, Sir, commonsense was not so confined to your country, a little of it here would make a great alteration in our affairs!” The league formed by Prussia with the Electors of Hanover, Saxony, etc., and the demands that king is now making on the States General in behalf of the Prince of Orange, furnishes another line, connected with the approaching periods, which *must* terminate the reigns of the Spanish and Prussian Kings.

‘To be ready to take advantage of the confusion of those we may probably call our political enemies would at least border on prudence and merit applause, as the happiness of mankind is our object, which, in my opinion, can only be promoted by opening the doors of liberty. As a great cornerstone to this work permit me to suggest a strict attention to the settlement of the lands on the Ohio and Mississippi, and leave that point detached and to its own operation. (I am not the least acquainted with Mr. Carmichael our resident at the Spanish Court, therefore in what I may say relative to his station I cannot be supposed to reflect upon him.) Let a gentleman of abilities and integrity be stationed

tioned at the Court of Madrid in a line more dignified than that of a resident, and let him bend his attention particularly to the operation of South American politics, and endeavor by every gentle and persuasive advance to gain some small commercial establishments, and endeavor to quiet the Spanish Court on the subject of those advances towards the opening of the Mississippi, which the settlement of its banks must in time effect, and which that government is apprehensive of. . . . They are now trembling for the situation of their colonies, in consequence of our success and establishments so near their borders. A friendly commercial establishment with that nation would give an immense spring to our affairs, and it may not appear improbable but they would rather make one, and even open the Mississippi, than risk any violence from us in that quarter, as it might immediately bring on the important question between them and their colonies, which, as that country is so separated from the seat of our government, we shall find an immense difficulty (if they have no outlet for their produce) in checking. I know I am touching a very important, alarming and delicate subject, but this I also know; it has been an important channel of wealth to us not only before the war but from this source flowed the present circulating cash of our country. . . . This plan I am very sure will interfere much with the politics of our allies, and it is the opinion of some that the minister who attempts to serve America, independent of France, risks his political existence.

‘How painful,’ exclaims our Colonel pensively, ‘is that situation in which you cannot benefit yourself without offending your friend. . . . Mr. Adams’ last dispatches mentioned the appointment of Mr. Lamb and Mr. Randall, and their having departed for Algiers; Mr. Barclay and Mr. Franks, I suppose by this time are on their way to Morocco. From what little information I could collect of the characters of those monarchs I do not think we have much to promise ourselves from the negotiation with the Algerine. He is a haughty, supercilious prince, his court is corrupt and extravagant, and it will require a considerable distribution of presents to work our way there. From the character of the Emperor of Morocco, Mr. Barclay’s errand wears a more favorable aspect. He is a mild prince, on the decline of life and a devotee: He has lately released prisoners on the principle
of

of making his peace with Heaven, has pardoned, after subduing, his son who raised a rebellion in his kingdom, and is disposed to move in milder paths than any of his neighbors. I shall esteem myself honored by an answer to this, with some more favorable account of our situation than we have from British newspapers and reports.

'I have the Honor to be with great respect, Sir

'Your most obt. Hble: Servt.

'(Signed) W. S. SMITH.'

Perhaps the Colonel lost a letter from Mr. Jay; perhaps in the absorbing business of being in love and getting married he skipped a line or two. Mr. Jay's answer, acknowledging the summer's correspondence and its communication to Congress, begins with a dry reminder, and ends with a dryer injunction to the impulsive one, not to forget his labels, although he seems to appreciate the value of the Colonel's keen and voluminous observations. September 5, 1786, Mr. Jay writes, at a loss as to whether a certain letter from the Colonel 'was intended to be public and official or private and confidential,' but thinks it his 'Duty to communicate it to Congress. As this letter goes by the Packet it would not be well to dwell on particulars. Be so kind as to inform me whether that letter was official; to avoid the like Doubts in future write the word *official* at the top of each letter that you mean to be so. The Information and Remarks in that Letter are interesting, and it gives me great Pleasure to observe and receive such Marks of your Attention to the Interests of our Country. The Subject is important to us, and I wish to learn whatever Intelligence you may collect respecting it. Care however should be observed to transmit it in such a manner as to guard against Discovery.

'The public Papers announce your marriage. Accept my Congratulations on the Occasion. It is a Circumstance which independent of other pleasing Considerations, must tend to render your official Relation to Mr. Adams particularly agreeable and convenient to both.

'I am with Sentiments of Esteem and Regard Dr. Sir

'Your most obt and hble: Servt.

'JOHN JAY.'

Mr.

Mr. Jay's letter, dated almost a year after the Colonel's first, we give in its place in the correspondence, although so far we have not even heard of Abby's engagement.

There was a gay, friendly little note from Lafayette in the Colonel's post one morning soon after his return:

'MY DEAR FRIEND:

'Enclosed I take the liberty to send you some letters for America. There is nothing new in this Country but that Cardinal de Rohan's trial is beginning, *demi forger*. What we have said respecting the Forts, it pleases me very much. Mr. Barnes from Boston is arrived on a Mercantile plan which I hope will much increase the Connection between the two Countries.

'Bonjour, Your affectionate friend,

'LAFAYETTE.

'My compliments to Col. Humphrys.

'PARIS, Decr. 12th 1785'

As for Abby's journal, when the Colonel returned laden with rings and snuff boxes from royalty, it went completely to the wall, but its concluding paragraph is revealing:

'Dec. 1785. The thread has broke, it is vain attempting to join it where I last left it, for I find it impossible. Events have taken place respecting myself, in which, perhaps, my future happiness may be interested. To that Being, under whose guidance I would fain believe all our actions to be, I must submit, and leave the events.'

Soon after Abby's agitated confession to her journal, Mrs. Adams writes Sister Cranch all about it.

'Your niece is engaged to a gentleman worthy of her; one, whom you will be proud to own as a nephew. I cannot pass a higher encomium upon him than to say, that there is something in his manners, which often reminds me of my dear brother Cranch. With regard to his person, he is tall, slender, and a good figure, a complexion naturally dark, but made still more so by seven years' service in the field, where he reaped laurels more durable than the tincture of a skin.

'He appears a gentleman in every thought, word, and action; domestic in his attachments, fond in his affections, quick as lightning

lightning in his feelings, but softened in an instant; his character is that of a dutiful son, and most affectionate brother. He trod the uncultivated wilds through the Indian country, and commanded a regiment under General Sullivan. As an officer, his character is highly meritorious; as a citizen, he appears all that a man ought to be, he loves his country, and is willing to devote his talents to the service of it.'

Reflecting this announcement, Abby receives letters from Eugenio and her brother. John Quincy, evidently not at all prepared for the announcement, thanks Abby for 'a profile' of his future brother-in-law. 'I never received a letter which caused me such a variety of sensations. I will only say that I received the profile with pleasure and that the person from whom it was taken will in future be very dear to me.'

Although less spectacular about it than the romantic Royall, Eugenio also carries a wounded heart under his brocaded waistcoat. He writes of Europe, Mr. Jefferson, and brother Charles, but forgets to send his respects to the Colonel.

'I am perfectly of your mind, Amelia, in regard to Europe. There certainly is something like fascination attending our acquaintance with it, . . . I must confess that a ten years' ramble through it would hardly satisfy me.

'My hints respecting what was said of you at New York were not mal à propos it seems. I understand you, when you say "you may perhaps make us a visit here some time within two or three years," though it is not speaking so plainly as you might have done. You have my best wishes, however, for every happiness.

'You speak of Mr. Jefferson's being with you in March. *Entre nous* — did he ever mention receiving the books I sent him just before I left London, by your papa's advice? I ask because I am much disappointed in not having any acknowledgment of them from him.

'I wish, Amelia, it had been in my power to have met you at Stamford the day you rode out. How surprised you would have been to have seen me on the terrace. But, alas! those days are all over, past and gone! and I am going to enter on another line of life, altogether new and strange. . . .

'I saw your brother Charles yesterday in town and asked him
to

to dine. I spent the evening out, and when I returned home I was told that he was there and was gone to bed. This was acting on the friendly principle which pleases me much. . . .

‘Every thing here wears but a gloomy appearance at present. There are many who are flirting about in silk and satin, but who have a sorrowful, aching heart. As for me, I am going to retire from this society while I can do so with a good grace. . . .

‘Write to me, and be assured it will afford particular pleasure, in his retirement, to

‘EUGENIO.’

In one of Abby’s long letters to her brother, answering an elaborate diagnosis of the ‘persons’ and characters of adjacent young ladies, the story of those last days in her father’s home is continued.

‘LONDON, *February 25th*, 1786

‘Your letters, my dear brother, afford me more pleasure than you can believe; I expect them with impatience, and am always made happy by their arrival. I am not surprised that meeting with our dear brothers after so long a separation put you in such spirits. . . .

‘I think, my brother, that you do not discover candour enough for the foibles of others, . . . A gentleman who is severe against the ladies is upon every principle very impolitic.’ Indeed Abby thinks it ‘the most convincing proof he can give, that he feels their power, importance and superiority. I challenge you to produce one instance of a person of this disposition who did not, at some period of his life, acknowledge his dependence upon them. . . .

‘On Wednesday, the Baron de Linden called upon us, about eight in the eve, and told us he had just come from breakfasting with the Duchess of Bedford, to which he was invited for 4 o’clock. Ridiculous beings! I was told of an invitation which a gentleman had to dine with the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire at 11 o’clock at night. In time, by such continued changes they must sometimes come right.

‘Mr.

'Mr. Barthélémy and Mr. and Mrs. Bingham called in the evening. They had dined with Lord Lansdown, and called to let us know it, I suppose.

'On Thursday, mamma went to court to present Madame Bingham, and papa presented Mr. Chew. Mrs. Bingham is coming quite into fashion here, and is very much admired. The hair-dresser, who dresses us upon court-days, inquired of mamma whether she knew Mrs. Bingham the lady so much talked of from America. At last, speaking of Miss Hamilton, he said, with a twirl of his comb: "Well, it does not signify; but the American ladies do beat the English all to nothing."

'I did not attend mamma, for going to court is not so agreeable to me; Perhaps,' she observes with a touch of quaint humor, 'admiration might heighten the pleasure, but as it is what I have no pretensions to, I shall not be mortified by silence. Mamma says, if admiration could make Mrs. Bingham happy, she must be so, for she never saw one so stared at. "There she goes," cried one. "What an elegant woman!" Some gentleman told mamma she had presented the finest woman they had ever seen.

'Pappa made a visit this eve to the ambassador from Tripoli. By a little Italian and French, with some *Lingua Franca*, they got into conversation and understood each other wondrously. A servant soon brought two long pipes, with two cups of coffee. Pappa took both; and smoked away, taking a sip of coffee, and a whiff at his pipe; the ambassador did the same. At last, one of the secretaries cried out in ecstasy to pappa: "*Monsieur vous etes un veritable Turk.*"

The ambassador who evidently liked Pappa 'sent word that he wished to return the visit in the same friendly style. He was here two hours, but pappa could not offer him a long pipe. Something favorable may arise from these conferences, but we are not at liberty to say what.

'Mr. Boylston inquired after you. Pappa told him you were gone home to college. "What," said he, "as professor of something, I suppose." No, you were gone as a student to pass one year. "Why, he knows more than students, tutors, governors and all. Has he gone to teach them?" He said you had begun at the wrong end, and in his merry way paid your honor these compliments.

compliments. We have had as severe a snowstorm as we have in America at this season; the wind east, and so high that it has been impossible to pass from Dover to Calais. Col. Smith has been detained there since Tuesday.'

For Colonel Smith was on his way to Paris to commune with Jefferson on some important matter. While there he received this charming letter from his Amelia. We suspect a jealous pang beneath the lightness with which she acknowledges the custody of a letter from William to another damsel which he sent in her care, perhaps — who knows — with the very purpose of arousing the green-eyed monster!

'LONDON, *February 25th*, 1786

'DEAR SIR:

'Last evening Colonel Forrest sent a servant with a letter, addressed to me; but upon opening it, I found I was honored only with the cover, the enclosed I delivered to the lady who sat next me; but as I could not prevail with her to communicate a word more than that "the cake was good," I threatened her with opening the next, unless I should find something in the cover to appease me; but I did not keep my word, for I delivered two others, which came this day. I foretold at breakfast, every morning, since your departure, that you could not cross. I therefore commiserated your situation and wished you back again.' It is easy to see why Abby admired Mr. Peters. 'Mr. Peters arrived the day you set off; he has spent two evenings with us, and I entered into the man's character from one single circumstance: there were several letters here for him, which when I gave them to him, he arose and went to the lights, unsealed them, then threw them upon the table, and with an honest bluntness broke out, "not one line from my wife, the d——l, I had rather have found two lines from her, than ten folios from any one else!" You know the man.

'I forgot to ask you to present my compliments to Mr. Jefferson, and desire him to bring Patty with him, and let her tarry with me, whilst he is in London. I designed to have asked you to have got me a certain article in France. I had the memorandum and money in my hand; but first tried you with respect to yourself, and you looked so solemn, and hesitated so much to serve
yourself,



ABIGAIL ADAMS SMITH

From a portrait by Mather Brown painted in London about 1787



yourself, that I put my money again into my pocket, and threw the memorandum into the fire. Adieu!

'Yours, &c.

'A. A.'

In a letter to Rufus King that winter, Mr. Adams speaks of his request to Congress that Colonel Smith be appointed Consul-General to Great Britain. There is also a letter from the Colonel to Mr. King showing that he would have been glad to hold the office.

'I do not know that there are any emoluments attending the station, but that you know I do not care for. I am not covetous of gold, "nor care who feeds upon my cost," but if it be a sin to covet honor I am the most offending soul alive. It is the confidence of my country I aspire to, and the acquirement of such knowledge as will serve her.'

And no one who has come to know the man through his letters, and those of others to and about him, can doubt the utter sincerity of those words.

CHAPTER XVII

THE COLONEL'S LADY

ON June 12th, a year after that entrance of the conquering hero so unobtrusively recorded in Mrs. Adams's letter to Thomas Jefferson, Abigail Amelia Adams and William Stephens Smith were married by the Bishop of Saint Asaph's in London. At the end of the Colonel's official letter to Mr. Jefferson that 12th of June, there is a momentous postscript: "N. B. This day Miss Adams and W. S. S. declare their Friendship for each other to the world."

Mr. Adams writes to James Warren after the event: 'I have given my daughter to Colonel Smith, a man of merit formed in the School of his Country's Afflictions. The young couple appear to be very happy.'

It is not surprising that we find no outpourings in Abigail's journal. Into the discard with the poor substitute! Abby is living her romance now. But again in John Adams's terse, unremitting record of his days we find this note, July first, 1786: 'Last night Colonel Smith and his lady took their leave of us and went to their house in Wimpole Street.'

And so henceforth our Abigail is no longer the First American Minister's lovely daughter, but the Colonel's lady, and a new element, sometimes disturbing to the Adams gentlemen, was to be mingled with their blood for all time — the true mysticism of marriage. When the Colonel, a few months later, hopped away with Abby, leaving a letter about the Indians that Mr. Adams thought he needed locked up in his room, we find Pappa-in-law 'inclined to be miffed.' But, in his next he sends his 'love to Abby Smith and her Knight.'

As for poor, deserted Royall Tyler, what became of him?

When he heard of Abby's marriage, Mary tells us, he 'threw up the practice of law' (he preferred play-writing anyhow), and in the best tradition of the jilted 'returned to the solitude' of his mother's comfortable home in Jamaica Plain, where between outbursts of despair he unquestionably wrote dramas. His historian assures us that he remained 'inconsolable for four years,' eventually emerging, however, to fall in love with that same
historian

historian who grew up to become 'Grandmother Tyler.' Our sympathy goes out to Royall, but it was the era of the gesture. The encyclopedia tells us that the forsaken one's play, 'The Contrast,' was successfully produced in New York in 1786, the year of Abigail's marriage. So we may picture the despairing playwright-lover abandoning his hermitage for a day or two, wrapt in melancholy as in a cloak atop the Boston coach, on his way to the compensations of his New York première.¹

Royall seems here to have treated himself to a little vacation of the heart. 'No doubt he lived too freely,' Grandmother Tyler admits of this New York interlude. The compensations of wildness were permitted the young gentleman who had been crossed in love in those days, just as the female of the species was, less hilariously, in duty bound to die of a broken heart. The author of 'The Contrast' and 'Mayday in Town, or New York in an Uproar,' returned home to recuperate ('to rusticate,' his descendant puts it), his spirits greatly depressed. . . . 'It is possible,' she continues, 'that he may have met *those* in New York, or seen *them*, that he never wished to see, but he would not communicate his grief.' But if the unconsolated Royall was at some time harrowed by the sight of his loved and lost Amelia with her William in New York, he must have taken another melancholy vacation at a later period, for it was not until 1788 that the Colonel and his lady landed in New York.

At the time of his sister's wedding, John Quincy was living with his Aunt Shaw, who eked out the slender emoluments of her ministerial husband by taking college students — mostly young relatives — as guests. Aunt Shaw was a flawless example of the eighteenth-century blue-stocking — not, however, of the kind that is lacking in the oft-mentioned quality of 'sex appeal,' as will be seen later. According to Mrs. Ellet, Poe's *bête noire*, Mrs. Shaw, 'when entertaining youthful listeners with some improving topic, would frequently recite pages from Shakespeare and other English poets.' Aunt Shaw evidently fancied herself as an elocutionist, no less than as a correspondent. We see Aunt Shaw with her opening sentence written — and that is rather curious — the very day that, unknown to her, Abby and the Colonel

¹ *The Contrast* was the first play by an American dramatist to be produced in the American theatre.

Colonel were taking their vows before the bishop on the other side of the Atlantic.

‘HAVERHILL, June 12th, 1786

‘Pray, Madam, are you married? Nay, then, the wonder ceases. No matter now how loose your affections are towards every other object; no matter now if every former friend lies neglected and forgotten! But is love really a *narrower* of the *heart*? Is it to this cause that I must ascribe the long silence of my niece? That not one friend has been favored with one line since October, that I can hear of, except her brother? . . . Does love, as Mr. J. Q. A. affirms, “*diminish general benevolence and particular friendships?*” Does it, like a vortex, draw all into one point and absorb every stream of social affection? If so, why then have I been a long while mistaken; for I have ever considered it as an emanation from the Almighty Mind. Though, like other passions, it may operate differently upon different characters; yet when this divine spark is directed to a worthy object, how does it enlarge the heart, give elegance to thought, and refine the taste; and from believing *one* object deserving of our best affections, we find ourselves drawn out in universal benevolence towards the whole human race. . . .

‘Here is the opinion of your aunt and your brother upon the same subject. You see how opposite they are. . . . I would never allow it was so *base* and *sordid* a passion as he considered it, and told him, however wise he was in other matters, yet he was but a novice in this. . . .

‘I have a recent instance in Mr. Thaxter [was this the Mr. Thaxter whose devotion to his journal so exasperated Mr. Adams?] who was spurned more at the idea of being in love than *he*. . . . So that I have great hopes of your brother. His time is not yet come. Minerva will for a while, I hope, shield him from the fascinating charms of a Calypso, a Eucharis. His business, now to woo fair Science in her secret walks, he must hardly indulge the idea of anything else, or view it only as a beautiful landscape, whose original he may one day probably reach.’ . . .

After giving full rein to classic metaphor, Aunt Shaw becomes suddenly human and lovable.

‘And now, my dear niece, I will plainly tell you that I feel hurt that so many vessels have arrived without one line for your aunt
Shaw,

Shaw, who loves you so tenderly, and feels as interested in every thing that befalls, or can happen to my dear friend, as anyone in America. I am sorry if you want assurances of this. I wrote to you twice in the course of the winter. One was a particular answer to yours of October the 2d, and August 3d. As they have not been noticed I fear they are lost. I cannot believe my niece so wholly devoted to scenes of dissipation as to forget her friend; nor will I believe that her new connection has engrossed all her time and attention. If I thought this to be really the case, I would petition Colonel Smith to permit you to appropriate a certain portion of your time to write and to think of me. I assure you your descriptions, your sentiments, your reflections, constitute a great part of my pleasure and happiness. And as I would wish you, for your own comfort, to be a most obliging wife, I would tell him [here Aunt Shaw becomes weightily *intriguante*] that it was really an act of *benevolence* to write to your aunt; that every benevolent act rendered you more fit and disposed for the kind and tender offices of that new relation which, I presume, ere this you have entered into.

‘But in whatever relation, situation, or circumstances of life this may find you, Mr. Shaw joins me in wishing you’ — a pretty toast — ‘health, long life, long youth, long pleasure, and a friend.

‘Adieu! my ever dear niece, believe me most sincerely and affectionately

‘Your Aunt,

‘ELIZA SHAW.’

Aunt Shaw was well equipped to advise on matrimonial policies. About a century and a half ago, there was quite a bit of whispering about Aunt Shaw at the time that she became Aunt Peabody. It seems that when Uncle-Peabody-to-be lost his wife, he was, after the fashion of divines (especially in the earlier eras), eager to replace her without delay. He consulted Aunt Shaw, the wise woman, on this momentous subject. Advice, very explicit, was given, of course, and was about to be acted upon, when Uncle Shaw abruptly expired and the Reverend Mr. Peabody, seeing his opportunity, kidnapped Eliza Shaw, that store of wisdom and virtue, with a promptness that modernity could not hope to emulate, for rumor had it (it lies embedded

embedded in the pages of a very musty book) Mr. Peabody negotiated with Aunt Shaw at the obsequies of Uncle Shaw, which he had doubtless conducted. Truly a bizarre conclusion to a funeral sermon!

But if Abby forgot to write to Aunt Shaw in the midst of being married, she did not forget John Quincy.

‘I have to solicit your pardon, my dear brother, for having so long delayed writing you. I know that you will overlook it, and forgive me. You are not at this time informed of the change that has taken place in your family. Mamma will inform you of every particular. . . .

‘My Friend [Colonel Smith, of course] will write you by this conveyance. You must continue to favor me with your daily journal with as much freedom as ever. Your sister is altered only in name. She feels, if possible, an additional attachment to her family. . . .

‘Many of the customs at the University, must undoubtedly appear to you ridiculous. It is a misfortune that people so often mistake the means of promoting their importance and dignity; but is it not the case in almost every class of men? I have ever thought that dignity exists in the mind, and where it is not implanted by nature, all the forms and formalities that can be invented by pride and folly can never be mistaken for that divine principle possessed by a few. You will, I hope, pay all proper respect to every governor of the University; and although to me you write with all possible liberty, you should be on your guard to others. . . . I do not wonder at your observations.

‘Today we have to dine with us a Major Langhorn, from Virginia. He has spent two years in walking over Europe and in making his observations upon every class of men. He appears to be a sensible man, and from his appearance and conversation, you would not suspect him of such eccentricity of character’ (as to make a pedestrian tour of Europe). ‘He has been here but a week, and has dined with us several times at Grosvenor Square, where we are almost every day.

‘Tomorrow we are going twenty-five miles out of town, to visit Mr. Brand Hollis,¹ nephew of the gentleman so well known in your University. I will give you an account of it.’

¹ Both Brand Hollis and his nephew were staunch supporters of the American Cause and contributed to the endowment of Harvard University.

CHAPTER XVIII

AN HEIR IS BORN

THE COLONEL had many letters from Jefferson that summer of 1786. The first refers to the affair of the Diamond Necklace, in which Cagliostro, that picturesque sorcerer and alchemist, with the assistance of Madame Lamotte and Villette, made a dupe of Cardinal de Rohan—a little spree of the imagination which landed all three in the Bastille, although in the end Cagliostro seems to have been sorcerer enough to get himself, his wife, and the Cardinal out of the scrape.

Jefferson was just starting out for England. The letter, like various others, shows that it was Colonel Smith to whom he most often turned for help in his travels, the details of which in those days of horse and post-chaise travel had to be planned for long in advance.

‘PARIS *June 4, 1786*

‘DEAR SIR

‘Having found an opportunity of furnishing myself with a horse here, I notify you according to what we had agreed on, to prevent you the trouble of getting me one in England. No news to give you but of the decision of the celebrated cause,—de Villette banished, Madame la Motte condemned to be branded, & shipped & to remain in a hospital all her life. But it is said the branding and shipping will be pardoned, and the hospital commuted into a convent; the Cardinal acquitted totally, but the King has taken from him his charge of Grand Aumônier & banished him to Auvergne. Cagliostro acquitted, but it is said the King will order him to leave the Kingdom. Madame Cagliostro & Mademoiselle d’Oliva acquitted. Present me affectionately to the family at Grosvenor square, I mean in the good corner of it, and believe me to be with sincerity

‘THOMAS JEFFERSON.

‘COLO. WILLIAM S. SMITH,

‘Secretary to the American Legation at the Court of
‘London, Leicester square, No. 15’

Abby

Abby continued to be a discreet medium for diplomatic correspondence.

'Mrs. Smith is disposed to open a Correspondence,' the Colonel writes to Jefferson shortly after Abby has become Mrs. Smith. 'She requests me to enclose a letter addressed to you. I am too gallant a Husband to enquire the contents as it is Seal'd . . . I send you a pr. of slippers. Your buff cotton vest & breeches I sent by a young Bostonian some time past.'

Mr. Jefferson must have been lost when the Colonel left London. He seems to have selected everything for him from breeches and harpsichords to letter presses and horses' harness.

'I beg the favor of you at the same time to inform me what a pair of chariot harness will cost in London,' Mr. Jefferson writes, 'plated, not foppish, but genteel. . . . Cannot you invent some Commissions for me here by way of reprisal for the vexations I give you — Silk Stockings, gilets for Yourself, gewgaws for Madame? A propos — All hail, Madame. May your nights and days be many & full of joy. May their fruits be such as to make you feel that sweet union of parent & lover. . . . May they be handsome and good as their mother, wise and honest as their father.'

The next month Jefferson describes the purchase of some friendly 'reprisals' for Abby.

'Petit tells me he has transgressed her orders as to the cambrick by buying at a smaller price a better cambrick than he could get at the place she named, or anywhere else at the price. I wish he may be right, and that the execution of this Commission may encourage her to continue her Custom to us. I say *us* being, like other comrades in chief, willing to gobble up the credit due to the actions of my inferior officers.'

The note of playful affection, the keen flavor of the Jeffersonian personality is marked in the next letter. At the beginning it takes up the challenge of the Colonel's letter. Evidently the warm-hearted William had commented upon Mr. Jefferson's silence.

'PARIS Dec. 20, 1786

'Not having any letters on my file unanswered, I shall not trouble you further.' Is this you? did you count 10, distinctly, between the origin of that thought, & the committing it to paper?

paper? How could you, my dear Sir, add reproach to misfortune with a poor cripple who but now begins to use his pen a little, and that with so much pain that it is real martyrdom? However I believe I am even with you by the constant tangle in which I keep your head with my commissions, — the harpsichord, Mr. Adams', and Sir Walter Raleigh's pictures, the map and some other trifles are still on your files, if I mistake not. I must acknowledge the receipt of the cotton and cloth waistcoats & breeches, a pr. of slippers, one of the copying presses, & Dilly's second cargo of books. For these I must give you my thanks, and particularly for the copies of the joint letters which came in good time. I at first viewed the Eastern disturbances as of little consequence. A letter afterwards received had represented them as serious, but Mr. Adams', puts me to rights again. Congress raising troops in the Eastern States alone, to make war against the *Shawanese* is a new idea. I suppose those governments asked it. I hope however the troops will not be necessary, & that the good sense of the people will be found the best army. I write to Mrs. Smith. You are too much a man of honour to pry into that secret. My wrist forbids my adding more than assurances of the sincere esteem with which I am, Dear Sir, Your friend & servt,

'THOMAS JEFFERSON.

'P.S. I send the map of S. America, for which I will pray you to make arrangements with Faden or any other. He is the best. For his gain he will wish to make the map large, for that of the public & for their convenience I wish to debarrass it of all useless margin.'

Little did the Colonel or Thomas Jefferson discussing maps of 'S. America' in those affectionate friendly days, foresee the plot in which a certain dark-browed Quixote from that land was to entangle them, from which one was to free himself at the other's expense, one to remain afloat, the other all but go down in the bitter waters.

That summer of 1786, Colonel Smith and lady remained in Wimpole Street, while Sir and Madame Adams took a look at the Netherlands. From an inn, with the intriguing name of 'The Three Cups,' at Harwich there is a composite letter from both

to

to their new son-in-law. It does not need the change in the handwriting to tell us where 'Sir' leaves off and Madam begins.

'THREE CUPS HARWICH

'August 5, 1786

'DEAR SIR

'After a very pleasant journey, here we are. We came very leisurely . . . dined yesterday at Mistle (Mr. Rigby's seat very near) and slept where we now are, in full view of the Land Guard Fortification. Our Carriage is on Board. Hearn is the Captain. It is my third Passage with him. The Agent for the Packette called upon us last night, in Consequence of Mr. Fraser's Letter. My Love to my dear Mrs. Smith. Mamma sends her love to you both.

'We passed a pretty Seat of the Family of Hoar, perhaps the same with that of President Hoar, once of Harvard College.

'At the Sign of the 3 cups, a tolerable House where a better is not to be had, with a fine view of the water from 3 windows, & a memento mori from the fourth, viz a burying ground & church, within a half rod of us. We are now sitting at the breakfast table. Pappa having told you where we slept &c has left nothing for me to say excepting that he twice mounted John's Horse & rode 7 miles twice, which you see by computation makes 14 M. In consequence of a Letter from the Secretary of State's office the captain is obliged to give us the great cabin to ourselves, for which we must make him a compliment of 10 Guineys & 7 for the Carriage. We concluded, as there were 10 other passengers, one being a Lady, that if any of them were very sicke we could not (doing as we would be done by) refuse them admittance, so it was as well not to retain it, as the captain promised me a small room by myself. The Country from London to Harwich is very delightfull. We found a card at Wood's from Mr. Hollis requesting us to call on him & take a dinner or Bed &c. . . .

'He received us with great Hospitality & Miss Brand's countenance shone. She treated us with some cake, we sat an hour, took our leave & dined at Wood's. Esther sighed this morning as she was dressing me & said, how strange it seems not to have Mrs. Smith with us. I had felt it strange through the whole

whole journey. One must be weaned by degrees. I hope you are very happy, you cannot be otherwise whilst you have the disposition to be so. Look in if you please once a weeke at our House, & let me know that it continues to stand in Grosvenor Square

'adieu, Yours affectionately

'A. A.

'To

'WILLIAM S. SMITH ESQ

'Chargé des Affaires of the United States of America

'Wimpole Street No. 16 London

Recording this friendly visit in his diary, Mr. Adams remarks that Mr. Hollis 'calls a tall cypress in his pleasure grounds General Washington, and another Colonel Smith.'

Mrs. Adams's delightful letters from Holland reveal nothing but admiration for the people, but in their flat lowlands she finds 'such a lack of my dear variety that I believe an English robber would have animated me.' And after a 'jaunt of three miles through a sand like Weymouth Hill,' she found the view 'not worth the fatigue, especially after having seen Paine's Hill.' Abby and Abigail were unflinchingly loyal to the American landscape.

The following spring Mrs. Adams has some real news to send back to New England. May 14th, 1787, she writes to Mercy Warren: 'I will not inclose this letter without informing you that I am a grand — O, no! That would be confessing myself old, which would be quite unfashionable and vulgar, but true it is I have a fine grandson. I regret a little that it was not a daughter.' Premonition, perhaps, that that daughter, when she came, was to be their dearest.

Abby's son was named William for his father, and Steuben for the old Baron to whom the Colonel was so much attached. He was born on April 2, 1787, and when he was a month old, his father was sent on a mission to Spain and Portugal — remote and little traveled countries in those days. That was hard for both, hardest, of course, for Abby, but the Colonel wrote very charming letters, and Abby kept them to the day of her death.

Jefferson on his way to England writes to congratulate the Colonel upon the birth of his son. That baby, born on Thomas Jefferson's

Jefferson's birthday, was also to play his part in the South American adventure that awaited them at a certain crossroad far ahead.

'DEAR SIR

'I find here the letter you were so kind as to leave for me & am truly sorry I did not arrive in time to have the pleasure of meeting with you here. I hope however you will take Paris in your way back, & indemnify my loss. I am to thank you as usual for favors, attention to the press, the mathematical instrument, books, letters &c. This done I will pass to a more pleasing subject still, that of congratulation on the birth of your son. May his days be many, & brighten all yours. This goes under cover to Mr. Carmichael, whom it will reach before you will, and its envelope will have prepared him to meet you with all the confidence you may wish. My letters from Paris attending me at Nantes, I am not able to give you details of any occurrences since you left that place; and the hurry with which I am pursuing the objects which brought me here, in order that I may get on the road again, oblige me to conclude with wishes for your happiness, always repeated, yet always sincere, & assurances of the esteem with which I am Dear Sir

'Your friend & servt.

'TH. JEFFERSON

'Monsieur le Colonel W. S. Smith

'Secrétaire de legation des E. U. d'Amerique

'a la cour de Londres chez Monsieur Carmichael a Madrid

'BORDEAUX May 26th, 1787.

The Colonel had a charming letter from Lafayette before he rode away. The Marquis is eager to have the Colonel as comrade again if war is the word: 'I have written to the General about you and me.

'Well, my dear Smith, do you think that our friends are beating drums in earnest? I know the Banners of liberty shall be, thank God, planted from the Chimaux Country down to Cape Horn. I know that business is the very thing for me, and there is no doubt but what Englishmen must have a dance in Canada before we go to that with the Spaniards. But when, and how is the question; and there is a devilish great distance between the

Resolves

Resolves of Congress, and our landing on the shores of America. I cannot help being afraid of some designs in Congress to meddle with the riots in New England by employing an Hostile force in support of government, a measure which I would lament, because I trust more to the exertions of each government and the good sense of the people than to any continental measure in this business; and because it is important not to arm the people against federal ideas. If on the contrary the Indians are the object, we must wish well to our people, and be well on this side of the water, because the work will be easy. But should the ports be the object — and of course a Canadian War ensue — we must be very alert. I have written to the General about you and me. My journey to — is at an end on account of the assembly of Notables about which I will tell you what is worth saying. I hope this numerous meeting will be productive of good consequences.

‘It is said the affairs of Ireland have a chance of getting once more embroiled.’ We pause to glance at the date on M. Lafayette’s letter. No, it was not written last week. ‘You remember our conversations. Be very cautious in writing, as letters may meet with accidents.’ We observe this injunction to be cautious in many letters addressed to our Colonel.

‘Adieu, my dear Smith. My best respects wait on Mr. and Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Smith. Most affectionately

‘Yours

‘LAFAYETTE

‘Anastasia begs her compliments to you, and requests you will send her some American Songs, with the music, particularly the song of Treason and that of the Restoration which, in your younger days, you used to sing. Mme. de Lafayette and the rest of the family beg to be affectionately remembered to you, Mrs. Smith, and her parents. My friend Mr. Adams does, I dare say, wonder that we turn out such republicans as to have Assemblies. It is not however a compleat General Court, but such as it is, I confess I would not have foretold it twelve months ago.

‘PARIS, *Jan'y 16th 1787*

There is something particularly engaging in the picture of our Colonel enlivening the camp with those possibly naughty songs of the Restoration, which ‘in his younger days’ he used to sing. He was at this time thirty-two,

CHAPTER XIX

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOOSE

FROM Mr. Jefferson's next letter we learn that our Colonel has been a bit hasty with the book of ciphers. That a being so candid and natural should have been as successful as he was in diplomatic missions must have been due to his personal quality and the native keenness of his perceptions; for of intrigue there was not an iota in his composition.

In this letter we come upon the first intimation of the international farce of the moose, which, we learn from the Jefferson letters (edited by Thomas Jefferson Randolph, Patty Jefferson's son), was intended as a present to the Comte de Buffon, whose hobby was natural history.

'PARIS *Aug.* 31. 1787

'DEAR SIR

'In your favor of June 30. from Madrid is the following paragraph: "Mr. Jay says 562. 163. 449" [a long list of ciphers follows]. I have four cyphers, two of which it is possible you might have copies of, and two impossible. I tried both the possible and impossible, but none would explain it. I presume you have mistaken the cypher you meant to make use of. I did not write to you from Bordeaux on Mr. Barclay's affair, because it must have past through the post offices of France & Spain. The erroneous decision of the parliament in his favor was fortunate for him. . . . Before the receipt of your favor of Aug. 3d, Mr. Short had communicated to me your intention of passing by water from Lisbon to London. This has increased my misfortune of missing you on your way to Spain. I wish the Salon which is now open, or the pleasures or tumults of Paris, could excite a desire in you to visit it. The first circumstance will I expect bring Trumbull,^{*} and you might as well be of the party. I have taken the liberty of telling Mrs. Adams you will pay her for me a small balance of 27/8 sterling. Understanding that my
harpsichord

^{*} John Trumbull.

harpsichord was finished, I wrote to Mr. Trumbull, in your absence, to be so good as to forward it to me. I have not heard whether he did so. This will enable you to give me a final state of my account, which I will thank you for, that I may remit you any balance due, or employ it for you here as you shall think proper. I am particularly desirous to have Woodmason's accounts, because for want of them I have not been able to settle with the Marquises Fayette & Chastellux.'

But after all the Colonel's efforts on behalf of the harpsichord it somehow vanished from Colonel Frank's chariot in transit. So it had all to be gone through again.

'Mrs. Smith was so good as to give me notice of the draught General Sullivan had made on you in my behalf. In a letter of July 28 therefore, I enclosed to Mr. Adams a bill of exchange from Mr. Grand on Lewis Feissier, which I calculated would get to hand two days before the draught on you became due. It was payable on sight. That Genl. Sullivan should have incommoded you with this draught was more unaccountable than that he should have made it on me without apprising me of the cause. There does not exist as far as I know, & never did exist, an article of account between us. I did indeed, when in America, ask him to send me the skin & some of the bones of a Moose, which I imagined would have been bought of some hunter for a guinea or two, but I have never heard that he has got these for me, & much less expected, or cannot yet suppose, anybody would have asked, or he have given such a sum for them. However I have no doubt he will explain the matter to me.

'We are here in a terrible pickle. Mr. Grand, being about 1000 guineas in advance for the U.S. chooses to advance no more till he receives remittances from America, and Mr. Bucher tells me he thinks there are none coming from thence. Since my letter of yesterday to Mr. Adams, Villedeuil, the comptroller general, is transferred to the council of finance (i.e. decently cashiered). . . . There remains nobody of the former state but Bretauil & Monmorin. The first is too firmly supported by the queen to be removed, and the latter enjoys a very general esteem of all parties.

'Having exhausted the field of news in my letter to Mr. Adams, I will only add, what is no news, that I am with sentiments

ments of the most sincere friendship & attachment, Dear Sir,
your most obedient & most humble servant.

‘TH. JEFFERSON’

In the next, Mystery of the Moose is solved. It is indeed in its conclusion a perfect mystery farce. We can picture good General Sullivan, man of action, finding Peace all too heavy on his hands, enthusiastically welcoming this opportunity to besiege and capture the Jeffersonian moose. The letter also shows that Jefferson considers the Colonel eminently fitted to succeed John Adams at the English Court.

‘PARIS *Sép.* 28, 1787

‘DEAR SIR,

‘I have duly received your favor by Mr. Cutting. I had before had a transient acquaintance with him, your recommendation is always a new merit. I really think, & had taken the liberty some time ago, of hinting to Congress that they would do well to have a diplomatic character at Lisbon. There is no country whose commerce is more interesting to us. I wish Congress would correspond to the wishes of that court in sending a person there, & to mine in sending yourself; for I confess I had rather see you there, than at London; because I doubt whether it be honorable for us to keep anybody at London unless they keep some person at New York. Of all nations on earth they require to be treated with the most hauteur. They require to be kicked into common manners.

‘You ask if you shall say anything to Sullivan about the bill: No, only that it is paid. I have within these two or three days received letters from him explaining the matter. It *was* really for the skin & bones of the Moose, as I had conjectured. It was my fault that I had not given him a rough idea of the expense I would be willing to incur for them. He had made the acquisition an object of a regular campaign, & that too of a winter one. The troops he employed sallied forth, as he writes me, in the month of March — much snow — a herd attacked — one killed — in the wilderness a road to be cut, 20 miles — to be drawn by hand from the frontiers to his house — bones to be cleaned &c. &c. &c. In fine he put himself to an infinitude of
trouble

trouble more than I meant. He did it cheerfully, and I feel myself really under obligations to him. That the tragedy might not want a proper catastrophe, the box, bones & all are lost, so that this chapter of natural history will still remain a blank. But I have written him not to send me another. . . .

'The purchases for Mrs. Adams shall be made and sent by Mr. Cutting. I shall always be happy to receive her commands. Petit shall be made happy by her praises of his last purchase for her. I must refer you to Mr. Adams for the news. Those respecting the Dutch you know as well as I, nor should they be written but with the pen of Jeremiah. Adieu mon ami!

'Yours Affectionately

'TH. JEFFERSON'

CHAPTER XX

SOME LADIES OF LONDON AND LITTLE MISS JEFFERSON OF AMERICA

IN London, Abby is consoling herself with the infant William and in writing long letters to his father. Mrs. Adams also writes to him. One of her first, dispatched immediately after his departure, regrets that she must give him 'rather an unpleasing account' of matters official, mostly the financial difficulties that their good friend Mr. Barclay¹ has been getting himself and them into. 'But Mrs. Smith is now very well, and sitting here at the table, making herself a mourning bonnet, for the Princess Carolina Wilhelmina, whom neither she or I care a farthing for.

'Mrs. Smith has given you the history of the bills, drawn by a certain house, which have been noted for non-payment, and the consequent flight of a gentleman and family to America. The amount of bills noted, Mr. Parker tells me, is a hundred thousand pounds. When this took place Mr. Adams wrote to his friends, requesting their advice as to what step could be taken. In reply, they informed him that, . . . his presence was necessary immediately to save the honor and credit of the United States, as they must advance on their own account, until he could attend to sign the obligations. No time was to be lost, and at two days' notice the journey commenced. Mr. Cutting has gone as companion and secretary. On the 25th they set out: I have not yet heard of their arrival. This is a sad stroke, but there is less commotion here in consequence of it than could have been expected. The general idea is that the house will stand for it, but I fear the contrary; and what Congress will say to the step taken I know not; yet what else could be done? Mr. Barclay has drawn a bill for three hundred and fifty pounds since you left us. Mr. A. must protest any farther drafts, should they come. Nothing certainly can be done for him with regard to his private affairs, how muchsoever we may feel for his situation. I shall forward your letter, last night received, by this day's post. So here we

go

¹ Thomas Barclay was Consul-General for the United States in Paris, and was twice sent on special missions to Morocco.

go up, and there we go down, as I sing to your boy every day, who grows so fat we can scarcely toss him.

'All is love and harmony here. The Royal Father and Son, are perfectly reconciled, the one to give, and the other to receive. The jeweller in a hopeful way of receiving his thirty thousand debt, the confectioner his seven, and even the spur maker his hundreds.

'Mr. Hartley has just made me a morning visit. He is going to write to you, therefore it is needless to say more about him, for if his pen is half as prolific as his tongue he will not need an assistant.

'We are to have a large party to dine with us today, invited previous to Mr. A.'s excursion; I have engaged Mr. Shippen as an assistant. Of the number is Sir George Stanton and Mr. Hollis. I cannot tell how much we miss you; in short if it was not for the boy, it would be dummy all.

'We begin to dine abroad again, and I hope to prevail with Mrs. Smith to go into the country for a little excursion, when Sir returns; but she is rather averse to the idea.'

Mrs. Adams, like most of her generation, was no prohibitionist — 'Remember me to Mr. Harrision when you meet. I have a most sincere esteem for him, and frequently drink his health in the good wine which he procured for us. If any vessel should be bound for Boston, request the favor of him to ship two such casks of wine for that port as he imported here for us, addressed to Isaac Smith, merchant, Boston, and draw his bill here for the payment of it. The sooner he does it the more agreeable to us.

'It is scarcely worth while to say a word about return, till at least you reach the place for which you sat out. So I waive that subject, only observing that the sooner it is, the more agreeable it will be to your affectionate friend,

'A. A.'

In her journal, Abigail records one lovely English day — one of those days which for no sharply defined reason, sink into the soul and are remembered long afterwards — when she thought of all that the absent one had come to mean to her.

'The afternoon being fine mamma and myself rode to Kensington Gardens and took a long walk. It was more like an American

ican day than any I recollect in this country. . . . The presence of my Friend only was wanting. . . . His society has enlivened every scene for the last twelve month. Cheerfulness and good humor he has ever promoted, and always accompanied with delicacy and purity of action and manners. He is, indeed,' Abby concludes adorably, 'all that my fondest wishes could paint as lovely and engaging. The more I reflect upon it the more I regret this temporary separation which is the first, and I hope from my heart, the last I shall ever have to regret.'

The journal is attended quite regularly now. The Colonel is to read it when he returns. 'It will amuse you now and hereafter give me pleasure.' So Abby once more records the daily contacts — Mr. Hershel, of the solar system; Mrs. Copley, the painter's wife; going a shopping for royal mourning, visiting asylums — doubtless an engaging novelty at that time. The following bit is retrieved from a letter to John Quincy:

'May 10th, 1787. We were out all morning to purchase mourning, for the Queen of Sardinia. I like black for a dress, and there cannot be an occasion where it could be worn with less regret than on a court mourning.

'17th. Mrs. Rodgers and Mrs. Copley called. Mrs. C. is an agreeable woman after the reserve of a first acquaintance is worn off. . . . In the afternoon we went to the Asylum.

'19th. Mr. Jennings dined with us. He is a singular character; he says he shall return to Europe in the Spring, and bring Mrs. J. with him, provided she can furnish means to defray the expenses; this condition, I confess, appeared rather singular to me, and from it I judge she will not come.'

At one of Mrs. Paradise's parties, Abby meets Maria Cosway, the wife of Richard Cosway, the miniature painter, who evidently permitted herself some of the time-honored eccentricity of artists. Maria Cosway was a musician as well as a portrait painter, and her musical parties were one of the features of the London season. Perhaps Abby did not quite appreciate the importance of artists. Benjamin West and John Trumbull are never mentioned in their professional capacity, and of her sittings for Copley and Mather Brown we find no mention.

'Passed the eve at Mrs. Paradise's. Many ladies whom I did not know even by name — one . . . an elegant woman and well dressed

dressed for an English lady. Pardon me, ladies — but I cannot acknowledge that I think in general you discover a large share of elegance or taste; there was another lady, Mrs. Maria Cosway. I had heard of her, and had seen several of her performances in the exhibitions of painting. . . . The singularity of her taste struck me, as well as everyone else.'

Perhaps in this case 'everyone' was feminine. Several members of what palmists refer to as the Opposite Sex were great admirers of Maria Cosway. Mr. Jefferson kept up quite an active correspondence with her. One of his letters, a ponderously whimsical dialogue between Head and Heart, achieved much contemporaneous popularity.

'23d June. My father returned from Windsor, highly pleased with his visit, and particularly with Mr. Herschel [who six years before had discovered the planet named for him, which, astrologers assure us, is the cause of most of our troubles]. The evening being cloudy, there was no star-gazing, which was the object of the visit.' Pappa liked Mr. Herschel, whom he found 'a cheerful and intelligent companion; communicative of his knowledge. Indeed I have never known him so much gratified by a visit of any kind before.

'24th. We took tea with Mrs. Paradise. Met Count Lusi and two others, Greeks. The Count was very inquisitive about America, the manners and customs. His account of some of the manners and customs of Venice was very similar to that given by Lady Wortley Montague of Vienna; that a lady is never to be seen with her husband, but has her gallant, who attends her to all public places and amusements. . . . The ladies, he observed, had great liberty. He complains of the unsociability of the English; and inquired respecting the manners of the Americans; and said when the King of Prussia sent a minister to America he would ask to go. I confess I do not think he would be pleasing to the Americans.'

And now a few bouquets to the ladies of Philadelphia!

'26th. Today we had company to dine; everyone seemed disposed to be pleased. . . . Mrs. Stewart is an agreeable woman. I think from the observation I have made upon these ladies from Philadelphia that they are more easy in their manners, and discover a greater desire to render themselves acceptable than the women

women of Boston; . . . their education appears to be better. I have seen good specimens of their brilliancy in Mrs. Bingham, and now in Mrs. Stewart . . . Miss Jefferson [Maria] arrived from America, and was brought here this morning. The poor little girl was in great affliction all day at being introduced to strangers. She does not appear to possess the softness of manner that characterizes her sister. Her maid, who is not more than sixteen, seems to be as much a child as herself. Mamma has written to her father respecting her. I suppose he will come for her. I had the pleasure of receiving No. 13 from Madrid, which informs me of my friend's safe arrival and agreeable reception there. From the account he gives me, I am led to believe this the most unfriendly, unsocial country in the world, and what is singular, although everyone complains of it, yet as soon as they arrive here they adopt its customs and manners.'

And there were traffic problems in that day:

'27th. In the eve we went to the play to see Mrs. Siddons; there is nothing at the theatre but this justly celebrated and admired actress, that balances the trouble one is at in getting there and coming away. The tragedy was "The Carmelite"; the piece, I have been told, was written expressly for Mrs. Siddons. One may, indeed, say that she is inimitable and incomparable, she is superior to anything I ever saw in woman. Surely, she must have a perfect knowledge of the human heart, of its greatness and weakness. . . . I could see her forever, and still behold her with new delight and satisfaction. Kemble, her brother, by imitating her, is becoming great; he is the best actor I have seen in tragedy on the English stage. . . . Yet when Mrs. Siddons, in the character of Matilda, acknowledges him as her son, and makes herself known as his mother, the surprise and variety of passions which ought to have then appeared, were not well represented by him.

'28th. Paid some visits, and on our return called at a milliner's, a little, sprightly, easy, enchanting French girl; her eyes and teeth were charming; her hair and manner *a la Francaise*, which is saying everything in their favor. France it seems is more attractive in retrospect.

'July 5th. Petit arrived this afternoon for Miss Jefferson. Her father having just returned from his long journey, could not
come

come away again so soon. She is quite disappointed; and has become so much attached to us all, that it will be a hard struggle on both sides to part. She is such an amiable child, we all regret being obliged to part with her.

'8th. At seven, Lady Effingham and her friend, Mrs. Reynolds, called, and rendered themselves very agreeable for two hours. Lady E. is possessed of a fine flow of spirits and a volubility of tongue which is sometimes agreeable and always convenient. She has travelled a great deal and followed her lord when he was with his regiment. She has something masculine in her manners, which is called here ease. She is very affable,' but Abigail decides, 'talks rather too much of her travels. All her descriptions are entertaining. Some imitation of Lady Mary Wortley Montague may be observed. She diverted us very much this evening, I never saw my father more entertained.

'11th. Our little friend, Miss Jefferson, left us this morning, with great reluctance and mutual regret. Poor little thing, I pity her, to be thus cast away from her friends and left to form new acquaintances . . . I cannot but regret that she is doomed to be shut up within the walls of a convent. . . . Mr. Jefferson may regret that he gave his daughters this education. If he intends to settle them in France it is perfectly well, but if he wishes them to return and settle in America, where is he to find men who will be proper matches, or with whom they will be happy? Had they a mother the case would be different. I recollect an observation Mrs. Barclay made when Mrs. Bingham said she wished to stay in Europe to educate her children; . . . that she thought Europe better adapted to *finish* an education than to lay the foundation.'

The sombre apprehensions of Abigail at twenty-two proved to be unfounded. Beautiful Martha Jefferson (she was also painted by Copley) returned to America unscathed, to marry Governor Randolph and do the honors at Monticello. Her son, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, became his grandfather's biographer. Maria — 'Polly' — also chose an American husband.

'1787, 10th July. This day, three years ago, we landed on this island from America.

'There was in the twelfth century, a Sieur de Quincy, created Earl of Winchester, by King John, a signer of Magna Charta.

My

My father supposes the Quincys in America to have descended from him, and was solicitous to trace the descent.' But Pappa is not quite so infallible now. 'To me it appears a matter of small consequence. We can all trace our descent from Adam, and no one can go beyond him.'

In the Colonel's absence, Abby takes a little trip into the country with her parents. At Axminster they fall in with an amazingly active Mr. Cranch, some connection of Uncle Cranch, and Lucy and Betsy. Abby was glad to see him. 'He brought me two letters from my absent friend in Madrid.'

Mr. Cranch enthusiastically added himself to their party and seated beside Pappa in the chaise, gave an almost alarming display of trans-Atlantic energy. Roads were bad and hedges high. 'Mr. Cranch bore these inconveniences with but little patience; he pulled down walls, and tore gates up from hinges, bolts and bars, like a Samson.'

Even when they stop for the night, he gives them no rest. 'Mr. Cranch, who is very fond of walking, and thinks twenty or thirty miles a day necessary for a sedentary life, and who talks of ten miles as a morning or evening airing, invited us to take a walk round town.'

Abby apparently goes with him, but concludes with a sudden outbreak of homesick patriotism, 'After all neither Mount Edgcomb nor Plymouth, or any other place that I have seen in Europe, will bear comparison to Milton Hill.'

CHAPTER XXI

THE COLONEL WRITES TO HIS FRIEND

EVERY day of that long and difficult journey over rough French roads, not yet Romanized by Napoleon, the Colonel wrote to his Dearest Friend. Probably no one but a man with the resource and enthusiasm of the good soldier could have surmounted the difficulties of the trip which he made on record time, delayed only by his servant's illness, the inconvenient Mr. Barclay, who got himself arrested, and the inevitable official red tape of Latin countries, which seems to have been almost as involved at that time as in this age of Mussolinis, Soviets, and Kemals. So great was the Colonel's eagerness to get home again that he worked himself into a break-down and fever at the end. He made light enough of it himself, but careful Mr. Adams tells us how grave that illness was in his scrupulous, never-neglected diary.

Perhaps nothing reveals the character of the man so much as these letters to his wife full of his quick susceptibility to impression, warmth of heart, and magnetic personality.

It was the day of the copied letter. Even informal Mrs. Adams first composed then copied most of hers. But the Colonel wrote late at night, at the end of a hard day's journey, or before breakfast — for which he, soldier-like, was ready long before the deliberate Spanish breakfast was ready for him — the spontaneous outpouring of his ardent and joyous temperament.

The first, written immediately after his departure, shows him to have been a kind of Lady from Philadelphia among the Peterkins.

'YORK HOUSE, DOVER
April 26th, 1787

'I dare say, my friend, when you receive this, you will think I have moved with great rapidity.

'There have but two things occurred on the road which are worth mentioning; the one is my having met Mr. Rucker; we stopped, jumped out of our carriages, I into the dust, and he out
of

of it; he had a great coat on, and his beard he brought from Paris with him; I wonder how it passed the custom-house officers at this place, for they are as sharp as need be. As to the other, it happened between this and Canterbury; but I must insist in the first place that you do not receive it as a Canterbury story. Well, silence gives, or in this instance must pass for, consent, which being granted, I proceed to this ignus fatuus, or Jack-o-lantern story.

‘Curioni was perched, bolt upright, in front of the postillions, who were lashing their nags and clattering away as if ten thousand musketoes were after them, when behold, we found ourselves upon an extended plain and the sable curtains of the night falling apace; what was to be done in this case? Some would attempt an answer here, but I, like Will-o-the-Wisp, am above this, and proceed to tell you what I did. I took out my little tin case, and with a match lighted the lamps. The horses stopped, Curioni rose perpendicular and cried: “Sir!” I begged them not to be alarmed, but the one to sit down, and the other to drive on, and no one would hurt them. “Oh,” said the postillion, “what’s this?” “Phosphor,” said I; crack went the whip, and they moved with such rapidity, it struck me they were anxious to arrive at some inhabited place, and wished themselves safe home again. I must not practice this in Spain or Portugal, or I may be detained.’

Evidently the sudden and unexplained striking of lights was a thing likely to be misunderstood in those days.

The next day he writes from the other side of the Channel.

‘CALAIS, 27th April

‘I wrote you, my dear friend, the last evening from Dover, and I have now the pleasure of informing you, that in twenty-four hours after I left Grosvenor Square, I entered this harbor in a French long-boat; it being low-water, the packet could not enter. You doubtless must have observed the different lines of character on the opposite shores, therefore I shall not attempt to delineate them lest I should expose myself to the observations of a lady, who I think, is disposed to make some observations on life and manners, and who having passed the same scenes, is fully competent to make every just and judicious comment.

‘A

‘A knock at the door — enters a monk. Will you take a chair, monk? “I am much obliged, sir, you are very polite; I take the liberty of waiting on you, sir, to wish you a good voyage and beg your attention to our convent.” By all means, sir, I am happy in having it in my power to contribute my mite to the funds of so great, so good, and so benevolent an establishment — *tenez, Monsieur.*

‘Monk: “I am much obliged, the prayers of the convent will attend you, sir, on your route, and they will entreat le bon Dieu, that success may attend your pursuits.” Adieu, Monsieur. I spoke French immediately on my landing, and have been stammering at it every since.

‘The monk has spoiled my letter; Curioni has not yet arrived, and it rains too hard for me to go out to look after him or the vessel; they will not be here one moment sooner for my getting wet and satisfying my curiosity. Patience is a virtue, and I will nourish it.’

‘ROYE, *April 29th, 1787*

‘I wrote you from Calais, No. 2, having taken the route to Paris, by the way of St. Omar’s, I now write from the town of Roye, in Picardy, and I cannot recollect any other circumstance than a prospect of meeting you, my dear, on the route, that could induce me ever to travel this road again. I lodged at Arras last night, the capital of the province of Artois in the French Netherlands, remarkable for its fine tapestry. On this day’s journey, by the wayside I shot, and am now possessed of, four fine partridges and a pigeon, on which I propose to dine at Paris tomorrow. Passed through the noted town of Peronne, in Picardy, the place where Louis XI of France, had an interview with Charles Duke of Burgundy who after keeping him confined in the castle for three days, released him on certain humiliating conditions. Whether it would have been happier for this kingdom, that Charles should have taken such an advantage of the situation of Louis as to have deprived him of the crown, I will not take upon me to decide. . . . His vices being those of the “disposition and the heart,” form a long catalogue, unnecessary to be forwarded to *England*. I gazed on the tower which held him, with a pensive mind. . . . These affairs took place in the latter

part

part of the fifteenth century, and are interesting as forming links in the great chain of History. It is very evident that the general situation of man is better. Society has greatly improved, and individuals are sheltered from private and personal injury by the establishment of just and equitable laws. The reign of Louis XI, was more strongly marked with oppressions, private murder, public execution, and general injustice, than that of almost any other prince. But why do I run wild after the vices of antiquity; or why have I painted them to you?’

The next day, April 28th, the Colonel reaches Paris.

‘Having before I left London informed Mr. Short of my intention of putting up while here, either with him or very near him, I ordered the postillion from St. Dennis, to the Hotel de l’Amerique. I found a very polite note from Short, excusing his absence, and begging me to rely on the politeness of Pettit until his return, which will be in the morning.

‘Having killed eleven partridges, I made quite a figure as a sportsman on my entrance. On my arrival at the several posts, I got out, left Curio to change the horses, and taking my large pistols, advanced on the road, and twice or three times had killed a brace, before the carriage overtook me.

‘After I have seen Madame de la Fayette, the Marquis, and the Count Sarsefield, perhaps I shall be able to give you some Parisian news; but now I have seen no one, and am alone in the house; Curio has gone to see his friends in the city, and Pettit has made his bow for the night.’

The next day the Colonel has a *tête-à-tête* dinner with La-fayette.

‘In the first place I dined with our friend the Marquis, and he expressed a great anxiety, nay insisted upon my seeing him at Versailles on Wednesday. I did so; and finding a great deal of interesting matter on the carpet relative to my country, was induced to stay until this day, which I have spent with him. Our dinner was so perfectly to my taste, that I must give you a small sketch of it.

‘There were only us two; the table was laid with great neatness. By the side of each was fixed, (I’ll call it) a dumb waiter. On which was placed half a dozen clean plates, knives and forks, and a small bell in the one near the Marquis, and the servants retired.

retired. The first course being over, he rang the bell and it was removed for the second. Thus we spent an hour and a half with great ease and friendship; not incommoding the servants, nor being subject to their inspection. Indeed the arrangement was charming; and being so, I know my friend will recollect it hereafter. Exclusive of the disagreeable circumstance of having servants hearing the conversation, I endeavor always to expedite the affair that they may be dismissed. . . . Now I am travelling I act myself on this subject; I get my dinner in peace, and Curio is attended by the domestics; he is welcome, and perhaps is pleased with it. For myself, I shall always nourish a disposition to treat my equals with friendship and civility, and those whose stations in life are superior to mine, exactly as their conduct towards me merits, or their virtues demand; but to those whom fortune has placed in the inferior grade, I will, in as few instances as possible, make them sensible of their inferiority, or take advantage of my station.'

There was a debt question then; but the shoe was on the other foot: 'You will, my dear, communicate to your papa, that the non-payment of the interest of the debt due from America to France has produced a disagreeable sensation; but that in the report of the committee at Versailles, on Wednesday last, on the resources and expectations of the kingdom, that point was touched with the greatest delicacy possible; they nourish a disposition to confide in the justice of our country, but they could not register that debt in the column of certain revenue; this is disagreeable. I find also, an *arrêt* published relative to their West India trade, which in the article of salt fish, puts us upon a worse footing there, than we have hitherto been; . . . I also, to my great surprise, find that Monsieur De Calenne's letter of the 22d of October last, to Mr. Jefferson, on the subject of the American trade, is not yet passed the Council. . . . This, if not speedily remedied, will produce a disagreeable sensation. Monsieur Evorqueux the comptroller general, retired from office yesterday morning, and it is expected Monsieur de Villedeuel, of Rouen, will be appointed. He is said to be an honest, sensible man, a friend of the Marquis de la Fayette. In short, from the changes which have taken place in the cabinet of this court, America has better prospects in the line of commerce and friendship than heretofore.

heretofore. The Archbishop of Toulouse is virtuous, humane, and enlightened. Monsieur Montmorin is well disposed towards America, and they all respect and esteem Lafayette, who stands in a most enviable point of view in the national mind; . . . I hope my friend will not be tired with this political detail, and that she will be pleased to inform her papa that I think information of this kind, contained in a letter addressed to you, will pass better guarded from curiosity and inspection, than if addressed to His Excellency, &c. The Marquis tells me he had wrote a long letter, containing a statement of an ambitious project, and that he requested you to reserve it until my return, should I be absent when it arrived. I have given him assurances of its being sacred.'

It is a pity that this letter has been lost. The next paragraph brings Abby delightful reassurance. The French ladies are not nearly so attractive as they used to be.

'I have been once to the theatre to see the famous tigers. An astonishing change has taken place in the theatres of France; the two last times I was here, I was pleased with the display of female beauty; but upon my word, I have not seen a handsome woman since I have been in the kingdom. Perhaps I shall see some in Spain or Portugal — no, there they wear veils.'

There is poetic impressionability in the Colonel's description of the château at Blois, then unrestored:

'BLOIS, Thursday evening, May 10 or 11th.

'I put up a little before seven, that I might inform my Amelia of my progress, and have an opportunity of viewing this town, so renowned in history. Having lodged at Tours last night, I passed through the noted city of Orleans this morning.

'In its main street is erected the famous monument of Charles the Seventh, and the Maid of Orleans; whose history I suppose you are in some degree acquainted with. . . . I took a solitary walk before night, to an old and decayed castle, over-grown with moss, and towering in a solemn gloom, as if the very battlements themselves were conscious of the scenes which have been transacted within its walls. In this place the Duke of Guise fell a victim to the vengeance of Henry the Third. Isabella of Baria, and Mary of Medici were here imprisoned. Valencia of Milan, Anne
of

of Bretagne and her daughter, and the famous Catherine of the Medicis, finished their days within these walls. I walked through the several apartments alone until near dark. It is magnificent in ruins. There are tales related about transactions in this castle which would chill your young blood, and answer no end for me to relate, for I am a professed enemy to sorrow and sadness. The face of Nature on the banks of this river smiles; the whole country has signs of wealth and plenty, but the inhabitants in general, do not appear as if they enjoyed the fruits of it. I look with an eye of superior compassion on the lower classes, and particularly the females. They seem to bear the heat and burthen of the day, assisted by some old men; the young ones who are good for any thing, are king's men, and wear his livery. I could enter deeply into the chapter of lamentations if I dare, but I must have room to beg you will present me respectfully to Sir and to mamma.

‘W. S. S.’

The next letter is a vivid picture of eighteenth-century travel.

‘BORDEAUX, *May 14th, Monday, 1787*

‘MY FRIEND:

‘I wrote No. 6 from the famous city of Blois on Thursday night last, and gave you a very lame account of its history, since which I have passed, and it is needless to say rapidly, through the counties of Touraine and Poitou, and with a whizzing kind of humming brain, find myself comfortably seated in the Hotel of the Grand Emperor, in the city of Bordeaux. It carries on an extensive trade, chiefly in wines, and the river is now well filled with ships; I have sent Curio to find out whether there are any from America; if there are, what are the names of the captains, where they are bound to, and when they sail, &c. &c. I do not recollect that I have given my friend an account of the mode in which I get along.’

And in that day of rolled and powdered puffs the Colonel’s ‘combing’ was no light task:

‘I get a cup, or two, or three, or four, of tea, at or about six, every morning before I start, and after I am shaved and combed, for I find I cannot, even when alone in the country where I am
not

not known from Adam — without the *s* — *alias* the husband of Eve — get over the trick of doing myself up before I take my tea. Finding myself now wound up, that is to say, ready to go, I get into the gig, (a neater never runs the roads of France) and continue going as if you, my dear, were to be found at the end of the day's journey, until night drops her curtain, which is about eight, P.M. The last stage, Curio takes a horse, and arriving about an hour before me, I find a chamber well arranged, and the table laid for dinner, which being served and eat, bed dressed and warmed, I generally get asleep by ten; and up again at five, go the same career. I find I can thus without the least difficulty, take as much rest as I want, and travel from 80 to 100 miles a day. Indeed I have thus far passed on lightly, and have not encountered one disagreeable circumstance, nor been put once out of humor; in short, I am more and more convinced, that nineteen-twentieths of the disagreeables and inconveniences of life arise from the powers of the imagination, which, agreeably to Mr. Jennings, always stand ready in the absence of real misfortune, to plague and torment the man, (and I suppose the lady too) who will permit himself to be made the dupe of it.

'You mention the receipt of the Marquis' letter. I think I am before you on the subject of a proper confidence, as one of my letters from Paris will show you. Well, there is a satisfaction in generosity which none but the generous know.

'I had got thus far by seven o'clock, when Mr. French came to pay his respects, and as I had been most scrupulously silent for six days, I gave a loose to my tongue, and was so *very agreeable* that the little gentleman, at half past ten, attempted to apologize for the length of his visit, but said he scarcely knew how to go. Well, thinks I, this is too barefaced, to sit three hours and a half on the first visit, and then go with reluctance, it's a polite thing enough. I am to be with him tomorrow, at the time the post arrives to receive another letter, but it will not be answered with this, for it leaves me in the morning.'

And now, for a moment, picturing the little son he had to leave before he was a month old, the Colonel breaks into poetic metaphor that 'dates' almost as surely as Aunt Shaw.

'Sweet is the lovely blush of orient morn, and the smooth surface of the blue serene in ocean's mirror, sweet the fragrant earth

earth arrayed in vernal bloom, pleasant the stream rolling its grateful tide after soft showers, but neither orient morn nor blue serene nor vernal earth, nor river's swelling pride, nor all those visions the gay mind could dream, so sweetly ravish the delighted eye, or bathe the soul in bliss so exquisite, as the far-beaming light from infant heir to the fond parent, whose yearning heart, full many a day has pined in deep despair. Oh how I long to amuse the boy, and clasp his tender mother to my bosom; to see him smile, and find her deeply interested in the scene, has charms far beyond the power of language to describe. Remember me to papa and mamma; kiss Steuben for me, and believe me your affectionate friend and lover,

'W. S. S.'

We find the Colonel willing upon occasion to dawdle a bit if there is any hope of making connections with a letter from his Amelia.

'BORDEAUX, *May 19th, 1787, 7 o'clock, evening*

'MY DEAREST FRIEND:

'I wrote No. 7 from this on the 14th and 15th, since which I have been engaged in examining the ancient curiosities of the place, and paying some attention to modern improvements. With that I was done yesterday, and Curio having got every thing ready for moving, I should have set off this morning, but having received a letter from Old Harrison' (thus disrespectfully does the Colonel refer to the donor of choice wines) 'that Mr. Carmichael had forwarded by the post a royal passport, and some letters of introduction to his friends on the route to Madrid, I have thought best to wait the arrival of the post, as those papers may possibly be of some service on the road. But another, and not less powerful reason, reconciled me to the delay — and that is, that it is probable I shall have the pleasure of receiving No. 2 from my Amelia. . . . I shall take the opportunity of the necessary halt which must be made at Bayonne, for the purpose of getting mules and Spanish money, to inform my friend of my arrival, after which perhaps it may not be in my power to forward another until my arrival at Madrid. . . . After Orleans, we bade adieu to the paved roads; this was a very agreeable circumstance

circumstance to me, and particularly to Curio, whose seat on the front wheels became more easy than before. . . .’ On another page the Colonel is moved to ‘say a few words in panegyric of Diana of Poitiers.’ The career of this able siren, he points out, proves ‘of what importance a lady may make herself, and how far she is capable of moulding the character, and gently directing the man who loves her.’ The husbands of the Adams ladies just naturally became feminists. ‘I must acknowledge myself a friend to their administration.’ But perhaps his Friend is not interested in light ladies however gifted politically. ‘Why should I plague my Amelia? . . . I only intended to have filled this sheet when I began, but I know not how to leave her for I find myself never better entertained than when I am writing to her, and therefore I must beg she will indulge me a little, and permit me to take only one half sheet more. It will enable her to trace the path of her friend for that day, (on the map,) and find him at dinner at 10 o’clock at night, in the city of Angouleme. This province gave birth to Francis I, your papa will with pleasure give you the outlines of his character, as it is drawn by his favorite author Guichardini; the portrait is flattering. “*Delle virtu, della magnanimite della ingegno et spirito generoso di costui, s’haveva universalmente tanta sperranza, &c.*” I passed the line with glowing wheels, and put up for the night at the hotel of Count D’Artois, in the village of le Carbon Blanc, one post and a half from Bordeaux. The night overtook me here, and finding the ferry at the last river not pleasant, I thought it most prudent not to attempt the passage of the other without daylight. I found the inn, that is, the room where I lodged, neat, and I agree with you that in travelling through France, you are much better accommodated with beds than in any part of England through which I have passed. I indulged myself a little in the morning, and arrived at Bordeaux at 11 o’clock, and shall bid adieu to it tomorrow.

‘I leave Mr. Barclay behind; he had been here near a fortnight before I arrived, having left Madrid in December last. By my letter to your papa which accompanies this, you will find how his affairs stand.

‘Heaven bless and protect you my dear,

‘Adieu. Yours sincerely [for so they often signed their most intimate letters]

‘W. S. S.’

CHAPTER XXII

IN WHICH THE INCONVENIENT MR. BARCLAY GETS
HIMSELF ARRESTED AND COLONEL SMITH
DISCOVERS THE INSECTA OF SPAIN

IN his next the Colonel tells about the travelers on stilts, a quaint custom of certain European countries in that day, illustrated, by the way, in the old tiles about the fireplace in the bedrooms of the Brooks Adams house — tiles brought from Europe by Mr. and Mrs. Adams.

‘BAYONNE, *Sunday Night, 11 o'clock*

‘I wrote my friend yesterday from Bordeaux; I am now half-way to Bayonne, . . . having passed this day through the worst country I ever saw. I have bid adieu to rapid movements, but will endeavor to make up for it, by early rising and industry. I have not been here five minutes, and I begin to chat with my Amelia; . . . An old woman who has just entered, is proceeding to arrange my bed. The room is paved with square brick, and she poor thing, has wooden shoes on, and clatters about at a rate that rather interrupts than otherwise. The whole of this day’s journey has been through a barren, flat, sandy country. The few people that I see appear stout and healthy; the men in general when they travel, that is, go ten, twelve, or twenty miles, mount themselves upon stilts about two or three feet high, and get along at an amazing rate. To see three or four of these animals moving towards you over a distant plain, has a very singular appearance; it brought to my mind the feats of Tom Thumb, and my ears tingled with *fee faw fum*. If you had been with me, I think I should have allowed myself to have been diverted; as I was a poor creature alone, I looked, thought, and was amused, but it did not extend to diversion. To give you an idea of how a man of six feet must be elevated thus equipped, a boy whose head if he had stood on the ground, would not have overlooked the nave of the hind wheel, came striding up while I was changing horses, to ask for a sou. His face was nearly on a level with the top of the carriage, so that I looked up at him and
inquired

inquired the cause of his application; he stammered and had not a sufficient appearance of poverty to justify me in complying with his request; I told him so, and begged his permission to save it for some boy who might want it more; if you please, Monsieur L'Comte, says he. Where he got the idea from I cannot tell, (for by all that's handsome, and when a gentleman swears by his wife he ought to be believed,) I had neither cross, eagle, owl or ribbon, not even to my hair. I wrote your papa yesterday, and said that Mr. Barclay was in prison; it was true; he was put there on Tuesday last for the reasons named, and to my very great astonishment made his appearance yesterday at half past two at my quarters, and said he had come to dine with me. The addition to my dinner was soon made, and he informed me that the Parliament of Bordeaux had released him, in consequence of his public character, not as consul, but as envoy to Morocco on his return to Paris, the place from whence he departed. It has made a great talk; both his imprisonment and his release; I am apprehensive it will not end here. . . .

'I have been engaged in my journey this day, fourteen hours; I feel not the least inconvenience.'

'May 25th, 1787, 9 o'clock, night

'Kingdom of Spain, and old Castile is the province. I am seated in a good inn on the banks of the river Ebro and have got safely over those mountains, which I informed my friend in No. 9, from Bayonne, I should attack in the morning. The difficulties which I am to encounter on this tour are yet to show themselves. I have hitherto been very well fed, and well lodged; it is a plentiful country, and if a person does not carry a disposition to be pleased with him, the disposition of the people to serve and accommodate, will very probably create it as he advances. I write this in great haste, a little disposed for sleep, having arose at three this morning and been busy all day in getting forward. The same time tomorrow will find me in motion; indeed I shall never be at rest until I am with my friend. Two English gentlemen who put up at the same posada, will take this with them; and dinner being now brought in, I must bid my love adieu; remember me to mamma.'

'I

‘May 31

‘I intended to have continued on this sheet, No. 9, but the gentleman to whom I was addressed, having arrived to make the necessary arrangements for my departure, I was obliged to put up a hasty prayer for my Amelia, and conclude, having scarcely room left to sign my name. I have now the pleasure of informing my friend that I left Bayonne early in the morning of the 23rd, and while the muleteer and Curio took a hasty bite at St. Jean de Lur, by way of breakfast, I ate some strawberries and bread in the carriage, after which proceeding to the river Bidassoa, and having crossed it, found myself in the kingdom of Spain at 12 o’clock — and perhaps landed on the very spot where the Dauphin of France, and Henry Duke of Orleans disembarked, when their father, Francis I, delivered them to the Emperor Charles V, as hostages for his fulfilment of the treaty which he never intended to comply with. Historians give a very minute account of this exchange of a king for his two sons; yet none have mentioned the effect which the sight of his two children must have produced in the king, their father, as they were delivered to the emperor to procure his own release. On the way, he is said to have often waved his bonnet in the air, and cried out with transport, “*Je suis encore Roi!*” His reign was interesting, and his character great but he lessens much in my estimation in the above scene; for in his hurry to become again a king, he appears totally lost to the feelings of a man and a father.

‘Having passed a gentleman and his family travelling, I dined at the first Spanish village in sight of the borders of France. The mode of this family’s travelling may be worthy of notice. A mule being saddled, on each side is fixed a low-armed chair, or framed cushion, in which the gentleman and his lady were seated, carrying each a small umbrella. Two female servants pressed the ribs of another animal in the same manner, and a pretty little girl of about twelve years was seated on the saddle between them. These patient creatures being led by the men servants, make a steady progress of about three miles the hour. I think it would afford us a week’s laugh at least, should it ever be our lot to travel thus, particularly if Sir and Madam were slung thus before us. But it would be fair to give them an opportunity

tunity to laugh a little too. For this purpose we would lead the van, and bring up the rear alternately.

'It is needless, my dear, to rattle you over one hill and another, or fill my letter with names of villages and streams, which I hope you will never be under the necessity of visiting. I shall content myself with telling you that I arrived here at 11 in the morning, on the 9th day after I left Bayonne; so that having arrived from Bordeaux there in two days' travelling, I calculate that I can pass from Bordeaux to Madrid in eleven. He who can do it in less, I will acknowledge to be a more active and cleverer fellow. I was always shaved and combed before four in the morning, and made a point of being ready every day before the muleteer.

'The roads through the Pyrenean mountains are so well made as not to be in the least dangerous, though rough and uneasy. Passing through the tolerably free province of Biscay, which your papa well describes in his defence of the constitutions of our country, the road enters the province of Old Castile. At Victoria I was stopped some hours by the officers of the custom-house, and for want of a passport was obliged to pay twenty-seven dollars. Against this, I had attempted to guard, by getting Harrison to inform Mr. Carmichael one month before I left London, that on or about the 13th of May I should be at Bordeaux, and requesting that the necessary passports might be deposited there for me. I was informed that the papers would be deposited. I was detained there several days longer than I intended by Mr. Barclay's situation yet I arrived on the day appointed, and found no passports. I can account for this in no other way than that the movements of my countrymen in Europe have been so uncertain, that every one has given up believing them when they say they intend leaving a place today, and being at another tomorrow.

'With respect to this custom-house at Victoria, I was at first a little displeased; but on recollection, being convinced that the surest way to overcome the difficulty was to submit to the regulations of the country, and take a receipt, that in case of imposition I might get redress I kept myself cool, sent Curio to make the arrangement, and contented myself in the public house until he informed me that every thing was settled, and the mules ready to go.

'Former

‘Former travellers, who have cast censure on this province of Biscay, relative to its scarcity and baldness of accommodation, must surely have set out with a determination to be peevish. I must say it is a perfect Paradise to either Old or New Castile. Indeed Spain is the only country I am acquainted with, that the nearer you approach the capital, the worse are the accommodations, and the more glaring the lines of general poverty and oppression. But I have been so accustomed for several days past to bound and skip along, that I can scarcely preserve a steadiness in my description.’

In Biscay the Colonel finds ‘an air of haughtiness in the movements, even of the inferior classes. The labourer in the field puts his arms *a kimbo*, and looks as if he would dare defend himself and his possessions if attacked. But the scene changes as you leave this province and pass through Old and New Castile. Here is misery — the soil is ungrateful, and the villages cannot furnish a traveller with anything to eat. I rested on the ability of the country as long as possible, but found it would not do, and for two or three days dined upon half a dozen cups of tea and a crust [driving eighty miles a day]. It was enough for me; and as for rest at night, I did tolerably in the mountains, but — excuse me —

‘Bugs of man do make a prey,
And fleas have their appetites too;
To avoid whose bite
I sling hammock at night,
And so sleep with a tolerable *gout*.

‘You see I cannot help getting prose-run-mad sometimes; indeed it is enough to make everything run mad to be so bit. I never was so sensible of the force of a toast I used frequently to hear given in the course of the war, as I have been on this jaunt: viz. “perpetual itching to the enemies of America, without the benefit of scratching.” I will never drink that toast again, it is too cruel; poor people, I can now feel for you. If it had fallen to your lot, death would have found you before the definitive treaty; England would have been saved an immensity of money, and the king and his cabinet have been restored long since to their senses.’

‘The

'June 1st.

'The court are at Aranjuez, and of course Mr. Carmichael with them. The first thing I did yesterday was to send a letter to him — it is six leagues — to beg he would forward what letters he has for me. I have only yet, Amelia, received No. 1; if I shall be disappointed here, and not get any from you, I will leave the place immediately, and go to Lisbon and be sick. I have already sent the things to be washed, and am making preparations for a further progress. I shall be out of humor with the world, or at least the post offices in it, unless I have letters; how dare the varlets detain them?

'I am already almost put beside myself by bells and drums religious. The host has already passed three times today. I looked out of the window, and observed whole ranks of passengers kneeling. The Spaniards appear a sedate and solemn people; pleasantry and good humour seem to be entirely engrossed by the monks and friars.

'The capital is very disagreeably situated, and has an insignificant appearance as you approach it. Perhaps I shall walk out toward sunset, and tomorrow may say a little about the town. I expect to be in better spirits to write, for I still hope to receive some thing from my Amelia before I go to rest. But as it is possible this may reach Grosvenor Square before No. 10, I will only say that on the 25th, having put up at the same inn with two gentlemen travelling towards London, I put a letter to my dear Amelia under cover to Dr. H., only informing her that I was well, and safely over the mountains.'

But at daybreak the Colonel is up and writing again.

'5 o'clock, June 2d.

'I was setting out solus at eleven last night, still expecting No. 2, when lo! it arrived. Mr. Carmichael was so good as to send his servant express with it, and one or two others. I read it, and took it to bed with me, and then read it again; I could not compose myself before I got it, and after I had read it several times, it would not let me sleep, and has roused me thus early in the morning. I have not yet been out of my room; I am getting myself cool and composed, for I have moved with such rapidity for twelve days past, that I think if on my arrival I had been cast
into

into the Tagus, I should have made as great a hissing as Falstaff did when he was thrown into the Thames. I shall go this day to Aranjuez, and lodge with Mr. Carmichael, as he has very politely requested. I shall see what is to be seen there, learn what I can relative to politics, and return again here to set off for Lisbon; but of all this you will be informed by other letters. I like your ideas of contentment, and when I return, will study to keep myself as much "*within the bounds of reason*" as possible.'

The next sounds as if Pappa and Mr. Cutting had been a little out of harmony. Or perhaps poor Mr. Barclay's affairs were to blame.

'Papa's and Mr. Cutting's jaunt turned out exactly as I expected, relative to the pleasures they were to experience. I have often wondered when people have their choice, why they do not as frequently pick up a rose, as meddle with a thorn; but the fault is in our stars, not in ourselves. The great object of life is to be happy, and to be so, I agree with you we must keep "*within the bounds of reason.*"'

It would seem from this quotation that the Adams inhibitions have been censoring the extravagances of the military temperament.

'I think you will say he writes a long letter before breakfast. I would at any time, Emmy, rather converse with you than eat. I am obliged to make use of a paper on which I have been sketching out some lines of fortifications in the mountains; thus you storm my works and make me your prisoner. I am well convinced that you will never abuse your power, or give me reason to regret having placed unbounded confidence in you; but that I have not said more to you on the subjects you allude to, and which you say I touched the evening before I set out, is because you have never put yourself forward enough in conversation to enable me to judge of what you wished to know, or what you would be pleased to be informed of.

'I am almost put out of my senses by bells and drums, accompanying the host through the streets. The Romish religion is played off with such pomp and ceremony, that I am astonished that the nation at large has not seen through the mist that surrounds them, and broke the fetters of priestcraft. . . . I shall

shall see His Most Catholic Majesty in a day or two, and paint him to you; but I feel a little prejudiced; this I must conquer. I have seen so much misery in the villages that I think I shall be disgusted at the splendour in the palace; I can be pleased with it when it flows from the liberality of an enlightened, generous people, but when the faces of the poor are ground to polish the throne of a tyrant, its glitter frets my mind, and forces me to dwell in painful contemplation on those vile oppressive measures which are exerted to collect from the too patient multitude the earnings of their industry, and the paltry over-plus of a pitiful subsistence. But enough; I find I am drawing to the last side of my paper, and I have no more; if I had, I do not know when I should stop.'

'ARANJUEZ, *June 6th*, 1787

'MY DEAR FRIEND:

'I was much pleased this morning by the receipt of yours of May 19th. Look at the dates, — May 5th, Paris, May 11th Blois. The places are very distant, and it is impossible to write in a chariot, going post. I have answered your mamma's letter from this place; I have not gone through all the necessary visits to the royal family, but they are nearly finished. I find everything here much more agreeable than I expected; the corps diplomatic are very different gentlemen from those at the court of London; here friendship, hospitality, and good humour, sweeten society and the political career. I have been here four days, and have dined very agreeably with three of them, the English, Swedish, and Dutch Ministers; I am engaged to dine with the Comte de Florida Blanca on Saturday, and shall begin to think of proceeding to Lisbon; but I am rather uneasy about Curio; the fatigues of the journey have proved too great for him, and he is now sick and a-bed; he is well attended, and I hope will recover in a few days; if he does not, I shall with very great reluctance be obliged to proceed without him; he has conducted himself so well, that I shall miss him much. . . . At Bayonne I took him in the carriage with me, so that all through Spain he has fared in every respect equal with myself. But notwithstanding that, he is sick and I am, as usual, in greater health for the active life I have passed. It is my element.'

'The

'June 7th.

'The grand procession of the court this day, has engaged the attention of everyone. The palace was thronged with "reverend rogues in robes," adorned with all the insignia of their respective stations, and cutting no despicable figure. After the solemn march was over all parties perambulated the gardens, where taste and elegance, accompanied with all the graces of the Spanish court, were laid open to view. I was entertained, and shall spend this afternoon at a bull fight. But you shall have more of this in detail, my friend, when I shall again seat myself contented by your side. I thank you for the information you give me in cypher; there is a great pleasure in having my companion a little of a politician. The news came à propos.'

The Colonel makes friends at the Spanish court as everywhere.

'ARANJUEZ, Sunday, June 10th, 1787

'I have paid my respects to his majesty and all the royal family. The prime minister, the Comte de Florida Blanca, made professions of friendship for our country and gave me letters of introduction to Lisbon, but he being a little *deranged* I had not the honor of seeing him yesterday as I expected. I have been so perfectly well received here that I cannot help communicating to my best friend, my satisfaction on the subject. I dined yesterday with the Comte de Kagenack, formerly the Imperial Ambassador at the court of London. The entertainment was brilliant, and he vastly polite, and desired his respectful compliments to Mrs. Smith and to Mr. and Mrs. Adams. The easy good humour which floats in the atmosphere of this court has had a good effect upon his excellency. He appears to greater advantage here than when I used to see him stand as stiff at St. James's, as if he had swallowed a crowbar. I pass my day thus: I rise every morning at five o'clock, dress, and mount on horseback at six — but where does my friend get a horse? I'll tell you, my dear. The Russian Ambassador, (the very antipode of Comte Woronzow) is attentive beyond description. This day is the second that I have dined with him; he told me his horses were at my service during my stay. I have, with all the modesty I am master of — and I hope you do not think that small — accepted;

cepted; and thus accommodated, accompanied by Sir Alexander Monro, the English Consul, who politely offered to ride with me every day until he had shown me all the beauties of this spot, I take a gentle ride one day to one part, and another to another, until about nine o'clock, when we return to breakfast, get dressed by half past eleven, go to court and walk in the palace gardens until two. That being the hour for dinner, I proceed with the serenity of a Steuben to the house where I have been previously invited. After dinner the card tables engage the attention of those who would rather play than chat, until the lengthening shadows proclaim the sun sufficiently near the horizon to make the walks agreeable. At this signal, the whole court sally forth. Before the evening dews fall, every one retires as he may be respectively engaged. I, an old-fashioned fellow, am now sitting, it being Sunday evening 8 o'clock, writing to my wife. . . . Old age, I think, has its joys, (though different) equally with youth. All that I am studious for is to govern and direct my enjoyments in such a way, as would not make a good man blush on recollecting them, in the world or in his closet. . . . You are both alone. Tell mamma, my advice is, to take John on horse-back, and by gentle day journeys, make an excursion into Devonshire — it can be done in four days. You can spend four days there, and be back on the twelfth. It would be a good jaunt for you both, but methinks you sigh and wish me back; I join you most heartily. When I do come, we will try if I cannot take some gudgeons for you in some part of the Thames. I thank you for rolling Mr. Paradise so well up in your letter, and then stretching him out again. "I ask your pardon, I don't know whether I explain myself well or not." Oh you are an arch one, but just such as I wish you, but rather too far from me at present. Papa, you say, is gone. I am rather of the opinion he will be worried on the subject, that he will finally succeed I do not doubt, but it will be by the sweat of his brow; it is the way we all get through life. I am at present looking with reverence at the finger of Providence as it relates to Curio — he is dangerously ill — but a few days will decide.'

The Colonel's next must have been very pleasant reading. Neither the French nor the Spanish ladies are attractive.

'ARANJUEZ, June 18th, 1787

'I wrote you, my dear Amelia, on the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th instant, and that I am still here is owing to the prospect of Curio's speedy recovery. I am almost out of patience waiting for it, but it would be unjust to leave him behind in a strange country, when a few days' patience may sufficiently restore him. I have wrote to his doctor this morning, requesting him to inform me when he supposes he will be in good condition to travel; when I receive his answer, I shall decide whether it is proper for me to proceed or wait. There is every pains taken here in the circle of my acquaintance to make my time pass agreeably; and I have been pleased and comforted, but it is not the theatre for me. I find the manners of the world surrounding the palace, very different from that which can excite my respect. I therefore frequently retire to converse with you, my friend, and can with truth assert that those moments of virtuous retirement are my greatest sources of pleasure. I continue my early morning rides. It is really a treat to be here; you may ride under a double row of elms and oaks, perfectly sheltered from the sun, for six or eight miles. It abounds with deer, wild-hogs, partridges, hares, pheasants and rabbits. The king is a great sportsman and passes a considerable proportion of every day in hunting and fishing. He is attended every day in his palace by the foreign ministers and the court, and they pass their time as at Versailles. On Sunday, all the royal family here dine in public in their own apartments, and receive the courtiers while at dinner; but more of this when I get home; when will that be? I shall consult the first fortune-teller I may chance to meet with, and if she does not fix it at a very short date, I will give but a small fee. I must say a few words in cypher. I suppose if this letter falls into the hands of a politician before it reaches you, he will not spend his time in attempting to decypher a sentence from a gentleman to his lady.'

Sometimes the Colonel put a very personal confidence in cypher.

'7 o'clock. I have just returned from dining with the Russian Ambassador, and must apologize for putting in cypher what perhaps you may suppose might as well have been wrote at full length. If it was anything relative to a political question you might

might be repaid the trouble of decyphering it by communicating it to your papa; but as it relates only to us, you will keep it to yourself, or laugh with mamma on the subject, as you please. 46. 93p. n3uu3p. 4. 5i. b3pr. 74b4n. um. u93. 0462; don't laugh at *me*! I have the pleasure of informing my friend that I called to see my servant today, and that I found him up, and in a fair way speedily to recover. I shall be a day or two longer on the road, lest he should relapse, and I flatter myself that the sea-breeze at Lisbon will recruit him so that when I begin to return he will be able to bear the rapidity of my motion back. In one of your letters you seem rather interested in the beauty of the French ladies. The only way I have to extricate myself from censure, as wanting taste, is to suppose that they had all retired to the sea-side to pass the summer, for it is a truth, not one showed herself on my path, which runs a very long line through the kingdom; and even in Spain, if I may be allowed to judge, the stock is too small to be worth counting upon, as we Yankees say.'

'MADRID, June 21st, 1787

'MY DEAREST AMELIA:

'I was rendered extremely happy yesterday morning, by the receipt of your letter, No. 5. The removal of the Court from Aranjuez, and the impossibility of making arrangements there for my departure for Lisbon, rendered my return to this place necessary. I am tired with the inevitable delay I have met with here on account of my servant's indisposition: but his health is now restored, (though he is rather weak) and I shall put myself soon again in motion. You know I am a great advocate for sloping the descent of life, and "strewing the way over with flowers," I will do all I can to collect a sufficiency for you and aid you in scattering them to our mutual satisfaction; and would even venture to advise the giving up of all intimacy, with persons who seem disposed to pluck the thorn rather than the rose.'

The Colonel quotes the 'pleasant-minded Franklin' on the advantages of looking on the cheerful side of men and circumstances, and repeats a fable: 'There was an old philosopher, who carefully shunned any intimacy with such people, and for that purpose made use of his legs, one of which was remarkably handsome, the other crooked and deformed. If a stranger at the
first

first interview, regarded his ugly leg more than his handsome one, he doubted him. If he spoke of it, and took no notice of the handsome, that was sufficient to determine this philosopher to have no further acquaintance with him. Everybody is not thus furnished to make this experiment. . . . The story is closed in advice to those discontented, fault-finding, unhappy people, that if they wish to be loved and respected and happy they should leave off looking at the *ugly leg*.'

'MADRID, *Saturday, June 30th, 1787*

'I expected to be on my way before this, but the king thought proper to lay an embargo on all mules and their drivers for the accommodation of the court. I am heartily sick of being detained here, but have made a positive agreement, signed, sealed, and delivered, to be taken from this on Tuesday; after which there will be a necessary interruption to that correspondence for a time, which during my confinement here, has been my only source of happiness. Mr. Carmichael has often laughed at me, on discovering my gayety and good humor, or my sobriety on the arrival of the post. Yesterday I was as gay as a lark, and read your agreeable letter of the happy 12th June' (their wedding anniversary) 'with every tender and affectionate sensation.'

Abby now combined the duties of secretary and wife. 'The letter to Mr. Robert Riddle of Castle Green, Dumfries, and the will received from Mr. Troup, I wish my friend would put up in the post, with a little note to Mr. Riddle. He is a polite gentleman, and the papers are of importance to him. If Mr. Troup's letter is open, shall I ask a copy? Mr. Sullivan's affair' (was it still the moose?) 'I shall attend to. I thank you for your determination to keep a journal; it will amuse you now, and hereafter give me pleasure.

'It is necessary that I should write to your papa and Mr. Jefferson by this post. The sentence contained in cypher of one of my letters from Aranjuez, I suppose you have communicated, and as I have some reason to think my letters pass very securely to you, I shall enclose your papa's under the same cover. Those that you have favoured me with, have come safe and regular, the last was not numbered. Tell Master William that I am much obliged by his attention, and hope he will continue to merit the
praises

praises of his mamma; kiss the dear boy *morning, noon, and night* for me.

'I am called upon to pay a visit to the Marquis de Arranda. I shall return to my pen soon again. . . .

'I found at the Marquis's a large party at cards. He is a gentleman of great fortune, and keeps an open table, where everyone is well received at dinner every day he chooses to call after his introduction to the family; but cards always succeed the coffee, and a ride in the Prado takes up the cool of the evening. What is called society here is the assembling of a number of people who immediately fix themselves at a table, and proceed to plunder each other politely at cards. But fortunately, everyone has it at his option to play or look on; you are left at liberty . . . even to loll on a settee in any of the apartments and sleep out your visit; a bow on entering, and another when you retire, will pass you anywhere; a careless passive civility is what is most current, and is called ease and gentility. After a ride in the Prado, the opera, standing routs or particularly *frescos*, close the evening; iced creams, and lemonade with cake, stop the mouths of those who are not disposed to be very particular to some one lady. The former I find excellent. . . .

'The evening rides exactly resemble those of Hyde Park, except that both sides are shaded with lofty trees interspersed with fountains and running streams; and in the centre, lest in the pleasing scene the company should forget the power of the king, and the nature of the government, a number of dragoons with drawn swords constantly patrol, the procession moves the round with great regularity, no one being permitted to turn but at certain windings and outlets.'

The Colonel found the streets of eighteenth-century Madrid 'elegantly irregular. It far exceeds Paris, or any other in Europe that I have seen, except Westminster. You say you should like to pass your leisure moments in the study of history; it will give me great pleasure, my friend, to attend you in this pursuit. In the meantime you will find in my closet Robertson's History of Charles V. The whole of that Emperor's reign is interesting. The manner of his resigning his crown to his son Philip, and voluntarily retiring from the splendour of a court to spend the rest of his days in solitude, at that time filled all Europe with
astonishment.

astonishment. He took leave of his son Philip II, on the 17th of September, 1556, and sailing from Holland, which was then under his government, he landed in Spain. Dismissing all his attendants except twelve, he took up his abode in a small house, in a small valley of this kingdom; and here — I think it is Robertson who says — “buried in solitude and silence, his grandeur, his ambition, together with all those vast projects, which during half a century had alarmed and agitated Europe.”

Then the Colonel sends a soothing message to his secretary, perhaps still a trifle ruffled by that unpropitious little jaunt with Pappa: ‘Tell Mr. Cutting I have received his letter from Amsterdam, and am much obliged; he was right to go with your papa. I think he had better postpone his visit to Taunton until my return. Remember me affectionately to your mamma. Sir is, I suppose, still in Holland. I am, my friend, with the most unbounded love, yours sincerely,

‘W. S. S.’

‘MADRID, July 3d

‘One more line, my dear friend, before I shut up my writing desk and bid adieu to Madrid. I have written several notes of thanks to those who have contributed to make my stay here tolerably agreeable, and had cleared my desk, but my heart beat it open to chat a little more with you, to say farewell, until I get to Lisbon, which calculation will be twelve days from date, when I shall again take my pen, and unfold the scenes I may pass.

‘Remember me with tenderness, and “all beyond, let wild ambition grapple for, and gain.”’

The next letter bears decided traces of former side-talks with Miranda:

‘MERIDA, July 9th, 1787, *Estremadura*

‘The weather is extremely warm, which induces me to begin my journey at two o’clock in the morning; we put up at eight and rest until five, it is now near nine, and the journey for the day is finished. When I wrote you, my friend, from Madrid No. 18, I gave you some reason to think that you would not hear from me again until my arrival at Lisbon; but I suppose you
laughed

laughed at the idea, and imagined I should steal a moment from sleep to say a word or two on the way. It would afford you no amusement were I to give a minute account of the villages through which I have passed; knowing one, you may form a tolerable idea of all the rest, and even the description of that one I think it would be prudent for me to retain, until I have the happiness of being with you. In some however, particularly in Orepesa and Truxilles, are the remains of ancient Moorish or Roman fortifications; the latter is asserted by M. L. Dutens, Member of the Royal Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-lettres of Paris, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, to be the country of the famous Pizarro, the conqueror of Peru. With submission to the learned gentleman, I take the liberty of doubting it, and beg that you will examine Robertson on this important point.' And for several pages the Colonel is very learned.

'Truxillo abounds with interesting monuments of antiquity; it was formerly a Roman city. There is a column of white marble in the square crowned with a pedestrian statue; it stands firm, and preserves its grandeur amid the surrounding ruins. I could not help attempting to draw a line of comparison between the people who raised this column, and those who at the present day were treading out their grain with horses in the environs of these ancient relics. But as "death opens wide the gates of fame, and shuts close the doors of envy after," and imagination is apt to paint in too high colours, I am apprehensive I have complimented the Roman character too much at the expense of the Spanish. I have a high idea of the former, and am looking out for every favourable impression from the latter. I have not yet made up my mind. There appears a strange jumble which I can neither digest nor reconcile — a further knowledge of them, and a little more thought, may satisfy me; at present clouds and darkness rest upon it.'

CHAPTER XXIII

COLONEL SMITH SETS SAIL FOR ENGLAND AND CONGRESS COMPOSES A LETTER TO KING GEORGE

'LISBON, *July 16th*, 1787

I ARRIVED here last evening, and sent immediately to the merchant to whom I am addressed, to inquire for a letter from my dear Amelia, and was not a little mortified to receive for answer that the gentleman was gone to his country house to spend the day. Well, says patience, wait until the morning, Mr. Colonel, and you shall have it, for I am sure the letter has been forwarded. It turned out exactly so, and at breakfast this morning I was blessed with No. 7, of the 20th of June, continuing by adjournments until it embraced the 22d. I have half a mind to get a cork jacket made, and like the lover who swam the Hellespont every night to meet his fair one, plunge into the Atlantic and see the white cliffs of Albion. . . .

'The difficulties which were painted on my route were easily overcome, or vanished as I approached them. There is a strange disposition afloat in the world, to let the *bad foot* command the attention. A gentleman wrote me the morning I left London some instructions relative to the route and mode of travelling, for observe, he had been through these countries. He recommends me by all means, to travel through Spain and Portugal on *horseback*, and to carry my portmanteau on a mule; for, says he, "for a carriage, the roads are but passable — *for an English carriage impracticable.*" I shall have the pleasure of relating to that gentleman how agreeable a good English carriage has made the journey to me; and I shall say further that I am thus far without suffering the least fracture only of one of the lamps, when the muleteer drove me against the side of a house. I very coolly told him I did not choose to go in that way. It is true that everybody appears, and some express their astonishment at so light a carriage having performed the journey. I have met with several who have broken wheels and springs, but by the attention I paid to this carriage before I set out — you may remember I walked often to the coach-maker's — it has fully equalled
my

my expectations, and I am much pleased with the fidelity of the coach-maker; his work does him honor. I have not the least doubt but it will carry me secure back again.

'I am rendered doubly happy to be informed in your agreeable letter of the welfare of my family in America. You will find us, my Emmy, a family of friends. In such a circle I think Heaven designed you to move, and not in the cold, unfeeling round of life, where each looks on the other with the eye of indifference, except only when they can answer each other's purposes. But check to your castle, say you; thank you, my queen. You say Charity expresses her apprehension that I have discovered something in her style which did not meet my approbation, and thus she accounts for my silence. You will find from this circumstance, my dear, how well I am known — even the waters of the Atlantic cannot shelter me from discovery. I own I was somewhat hurt at a sentence in one of her letters to me, but the dear girl would never have known it had she not made the observation you forwarded. I will now write her and smooth it over. I am a strange creature, I acknowledge it, but you will make me a good one I hope. I know it was not fair to let the trifle — for trifle it was — rest upon my mind; but I have very little disguise in me, and would never nourish the least particle of it were it not some times necessary to the happiness of others.

'My last letter to you my friend, was marked No. 19, (but you take no notice of not having received No. 10) from Merida. At ten o'clock I entered the kingdom of Portugal. As I entered the gate the officer of the guard took my name and I passed into the Posada. In a very short time the commanding officer, Senior Guillerme Luiz Antonio Je Vallere, Marechal de Camps, &c. waited upon me. He said that as soon as the garrison-guard reported my arrival and name he set out to pay his respects, to offer his services during the time I honoured the garrison with my presence; and hoped I would do him the favor to take a soldier's dinner with him. "You will, sir," says he, "excuse the rapidity of my advances when I assure you I have known you some time, though I never had the pleasure of seeing you before." I was quite thunder-struck with all this profusion of compliment and civility, thanked him for his politeness, and accepted his invitation to dinner. I would give some few pence to know what he

he meant when he said he had known me for considerable time, but here I could not with decency discover any anxiety.'

The Colonel seemed able to enter into any and every hobby with enthusiasm and understanding: 'On entering his quarters, I found his table covered with minerals, petrefactions, and different specimens of wood. I complimented him on the scene, and began with him as a philosopher, admiring the sports and arrangements of Nature which lay before us; he joined with great relish, and after running some time on this horse we mounted the botanical nags, a collection of which he produced. I admired some, and took the seeds of others, with instructions how to raise and use them. A case of mathematical instruments which lay near induced me to leap the ditch and mount the parapet, and we proceeded to fortification and gunnery, in all which I found him instructed superior to any officer I have ever met with — in short I passed the day delightfully. He extended his politeness further: after dinner he showed all the works and the interior arrangements of the garrison, and amused me for half an hour with the exercise and firing of a company of Infantry and Artillery. It was better than a pinch of snuff; and when I took my leave of him he gave me a letter of introduction to his lady and daughter here, whom I have taken tea with this afternoon; and ordered two of his dragoons to attend me through the kingdom, and to see me safe in Lisbon. This they faithfully attended to, and I dismissed them this morning with thanks and money to carry them back again; (if people will dance they must pay the fiddler.) I am diverted with mamma's dream, on the first of April; it shows at least that she thinks a little about us, and what she says of the *succession*, [to John Adams's office, perhaps] I dare say you will agree with me in supposing it would be better so than worse; but time and patience will unfold all, and my next will say something to you about the time you may expect to have me to yourself; but why, my dear, do you say your next shall be deposited at Bordeaux; have you not been a little too hasty in this decision? But it is done, and I can only mourn if I should be detained here two or three weeks that I shall not have another line from you until I get to France, which, let me be as industrious as I can be, cannot be in less than a month or six weeks; but I'll play you a trick for this, so look sharp.

sharp. During the course of the war I was stationed with three hundred and eighty chosen men at Updikes, New Town, in the State of Rhode Island, opposite the British army. I had detached a Captain and fifty, some distance on my right, to guard a pass &c., a circumstance came to my knowledge, which gave him some little advantage of the enemy. I sent orders to him in writing to do so and so, and press the advantage that fortune might favor him with, and at the moment that I expected his report of having done the business, I received information of the enemy having passed, and soon after his account confirming it, with a detail of what he had done. It was different from what I had requested, and he excused himself by saying, he thought he did for the best. But, sir, did I not tell you every stage, and promise information if any changes were necessary? He said yes, but he thought he was doing for the best. I was obliged to tell him he had no right to think. I arrested and broke, and sent him home to think and contrive. But this is an out-of-the-way story — Bordeaux is the word — and with love to my boy and mamma, I am, my dear girl, your most affectionate friend,

‘WILLIAM.’

And now the Colonel is planning his homecoming.

‘LISBON, July 31st, 1787

‘And I stand my hand, that is to say, having played the game of twenty-one, I stop and beat you. It is a long time though, my dear, since 20 was dated; but your goodness will form many excuses, and my candor when I see you will satisfy you relative to the long silence. I have been every moment employed since I arrived; I have got through all my affairs well, equal to my expectation, and have been received and treated with every mark of politeness and respect I could wish. I have had two interviews with the minister, and doubt not but my report to Congress will be acceptable; but more of this when I see you, which I think, Heaven favouring, will not now be long. I thank you for not strictly attending to your determination, relative to your depositing letters for me at Bordeaux. I shall profit by the hint in your last, and embark for Falmouth in five or six days from this, so that the next place you will hear from me will be there; and

and then, very, very soon my love, I will be with you. It will happen fortunately if you should be on a visit to some friends about Exeter, whom I have often heard your mamma speak of; a line left for me at the post-offices of Falmouth and Exeter, informing where you are, &c. would put everything straight. I shall have nothing to do after I land, if I find no orders at the post-office, than to clatter away for Grosvenor Square as quick as possible.

‘I was some days past at an entertainment of the French Ambassador’s; he outshines brilliancy itself. The company collected, in number about 200, at and before 8, and after looking very agreeable at each other for about half an hour, were called into another apartment, where a very neat theatre was well arranged, and the ambadress and her sister, with two French noblemen and one or two small characters, entertained the company with a pretty, light French comedy of two acts. It was performed with great vivacity, and the ladies, as in everything they undertake, discovered a sprightly, pretty genius. After the play, the gardens, which are extensive, were well illuminated and the company strolled through them. At the extremity of the walk was a very spacious hall formed by grapevines, well lighted, with music, and the young part of the company soon fell a dancing. For the graver, a band of good music kept constantly playing gentle tunes and furnished amusement for those who thought the gardens and the night air better avoided. Time passed thus until one, when a very elegant supper was served. After supper, the company arose and returned to dance. I had had enough, and went to bed. The French seem determined to lose no opportunity of ingratiating themselves every where by their politeness and affability. Apropos: the French ambadress here is elegance itself; she appears about five or seven and twenty, with a most perfect form and a soft animated countenance. You ask me about Spanish ladies — it is the kingdom of ugliness; the polite circle here is handsome, and from what I have seen of their manners, I like them something better than their neighbors. But I’ll tell you the whole story when I see you; until I reach Falmouth,

‘Adieu,

‘W. S. S.’
The

The journey by sea from Portugal to England seems to have taken about two weeks. The Colonel writes immediately upon arrival, although he is already seriously ill.

‘FALMOUTH, *August 20th, 1787*

‘I have now the pleasure of informing my friend of my arrival here this day in the packet, rather a little deranged by my journeys and voyage. I shall lose no more time in being with you, than attention to my health requires. My business at Lisbon was brought to a very agreeable and honourable period, and I left it well satisfied; a little pride, which sometimes on occasion I can bring into play, and a little address, produced wonders, and made the diplomatic corps stare. I came off with the Continental colours flying, and shall soon have the happiness of laying them at your feet.’

But two days later he is still at Falmouth, although he makes light of the attack of fever that has held him there.

‘I wrote you, my love, the first thing I did after my landing here. I then proposed setting off from this, yesterday or this morning; but I am still in check. I was yesterday visited by an ague and fever, which shook and warmed me alternately pretty tolerably; this day I am free from it, and with the advice of a very good doctor who attends me, I hope soon to be allowed to put myself in motion towards one who possesses all my affections and merits all my love. The acquaintance which I formed in this place when I arrived from America, and the letters of introduction which I brought from Lisbon, insure me every civility and respect I can wish. I am visited and attended in a very particular manner, and want for nothing but to be enabled to bid them farewell and hasten to you. It is a painful detention to be so near, and upon the same island, and not to be able to advance. You must not write, my friend, for I am in hopes before this reaches you to be on my way to you. I shall pass through Exeter, Taunton, Bath, Marlborough, as being the best road, having the best horses and accommodations. . . . A few days longer, and this painful separation I hope will be at an end.’

But five days later he is only as far as Exeter.

'EXETER, August 27th, 1787

'I have run away thus far from my fever, my friend, and find myself increasing in health and spirits as I get nearer to you, but I am little more than a travelling shadow. I have had a *tight time* of it, as we Yankees say, but thank Heaven it is over. . . . I shall get in motion again about nine tomorrow and lodge at Taunton tomorrow night, thus gently I am obliged to approach. I hope after I pass Bath to be able to be a little more lengthy in my journey; at any rate, I think I may venture to say, you may expect me to dinner on Friday.

'Heaven bless and protect you and the dear boy. Remember me to sir and mamma.'

But sick or well, slow journeys were abhorrent to the Colonel. Three days later, Abby's journal records his arrival a day before he was expected.

'*Thursday, 30th.* Mamma and myself concluded to take my son tomorrow morning, and go out fourteen miles to meet his father, but he presented himself about two o'clock; finding no inconvenience from moving rapidly, he came on much faster than he had any idea of being able to, although he had concealed from me his long and tedious illness. But thanks to that Being who supports, and sustains us, he is again restored to health and to his family. To describe the sensations of the mind upon this occasion were vain; from the memory they can never be erased.'

The journal limps along a little farther — it is almost at its last page.

'*Nov. 1.* We had a representation of seven states today at dinner. Messrs. Hindman and Forrest from Maryland, Mr. Shippen from Pennsylvania, Mr. Brackstone from Virginia, Mr. Edwards from Carolina; Mr. Trumbull from Connecticut, Colonel Smith from New York, Mr. Cutting and ourselves from Massachusetts.'

Mr. Trumbull of Connecticut painted Mr. Jefferson that year. He was also composing some of his historical canvases in Benjamin West's studio. It is probable that Colonel Smith posed then for Trumbull's 'Capture of the Hessians.' Indeed he may have done for him the service he is said to have performed for Gilbert Stuart in posing for the figure of Washington. Both
were

were tall men, well-set-up, having the indescribable air of the personage. Painters often use a substitute model for the figure and details of a portrait.

Our great Constitution rather casually enters the next paragraph. Abby considers it with the tolerant skepticism naturally felt toward any National document not framed by Pappa.

'We received an account of the result of the Convention, entitled the Constitution, which is recommended to the consideration of the states. My father approves of it in general; some persons would have preferred a system that would have given us more consequence in the eyes of foreigners. The powers they have given to the President are equal to those of many monarchs.

'I do not pretend to be a judge of this subject; but it appears to me, that we are not yet prepared for such a system. The principles of equality which we yet possess, would not admit of one person's being made so distinguished; besides, we have no person who possesses sufficient fortune, to render him respectable; in a monarchy power and riches are important requisites, and the people of our country would never consent to contribute to the elevation of any person to so high a dignity. They choose to preserve the idea that every one may aspire to the highest offices of the state.'

But really Pappa *was* back of it all. Later on we read:

'Every person appears much gratified with our Constitution. Many persons say here that they have followed my father's plan, and taken his book for their model.

'Notwithstanding a bad cold, I wrapped myself up, and went to the play, to see Mrs. Abington as Belinda, in "All in the Wrong." I think I never saw a part better performed than Lady Restless. Messrs. Shippen, Cutting, and Trumble, were in our box. I confess I am not an admirer of Mrs. Abington; she is much celebrated, but is not to my taste; she is now sixty years old, and no one would suppose her more than three and twenty. She is not to be compared with Miss Farren, whose easy, graceful, affable manner of doing every thing is charming. But Mrs. A. is the fashion, and has been some twenty years past, and still preserves her theatrical fame.'

Miss Farren, however, consoled herself for Mrs. Abington's
greater

greater popularity by marrying herself to the Earl of Derby a few years later.

About this time a perplexed Congress had decided that Mr. Adams's request to be recalled from his special service should be attended, and set itself to work upon the drafting of a letter to King George. One of the scenarios was as follows:

'GREAT AND GOOD FRIEND:

'As the time we had limited for the duration of Mr. Adams' residence in quality of our Minister Plenipotentiary near your majesty will shortly expire, we have directed him to take leave of your Majesty, and to assure you of our friendship and sincere desire to promote the most perfect harmony and confidence between the two nations. Our opinion of Mr. Adams persuades us that he will do this in the manner most expressive of these sentiments, and of the perfect sincerity with which they are offered. We pray God to keep your Majesty under His Holy protection.

'Written at the city of New York the — day of — by your Majesty's good friends the United States in Congress assembled.'

Not a little 'God save the King' still left in the American blood at that day.

Preparing for his departure from the Court of Saint James, Mr. Adams recommended Colonel Smith to fill the vacancy. January 24th he wrote from London: 'Colonel Smith has at present only a commission as secretary of the Legation. I may be permitted, I hope, without presuming too far, to recommend him to this office. . . . It is no more than justice to say that his conduct, his talents, and his industry, merit a much higher station than has been assigned to him.'

Congress, however, was not able to decide whether the office should be made permanent, because Great Britain was maintaining a sphinx-like silence on the subject. So all Congress could do was to dispatch the most diplomatic of their letters to their great and good friend King George, adorned with many dangling red seals.

In December, John Adams wrote to a friend, 'As Congress has not transmitted any orders relative to another minister or
to

to a *Chargé d'Affaires* at this court, Mr. Smith's road is as clear as mine to return home.'

Mr. Trumbull chanced to drop in just as Mr. Adams 'was combing the powder from his hair preparatory to his long sea voyage.' So charmed was the painter with its color and curl that he insisted upon painting the much-painted Mr. Adams in his natural colors, and so, on the eve of departure, Pappa, always a willing subject, graciously consented to sit for another portrait.

When Jefferson realized that the Colonel was actually leaving England, he wrote, quite helplessly, to ask 'the address of my Shoemaker & Taylor that I may know how to apply to them after your departure.' William wanted to continue serving America in England and seems to have written quite a mournful letter to Jefferson, who replied with charming sympathy, on the last day of the Year of Grace 1787:

'I hope work will be found for you on the other side of the Atlantic, since there is so little to do on this. . . . My friends shall be admonished of the pleasure it will give me that they become yours also. . . . You are going to be happy whether you have something to do or nothing. You have a wife who will make you happy. . . . Even were you disposed to run restive against your own felicity you will be having children which will be making you happier and happier every day. Your sun of joy is climbing towards its zenith, whilst mine is descending from it. So goodnight. God bless you.

'Yours affectionately

'THOMAS JEFFERSON.'

So in April, 1788, to Mrs. Adams' joy, but with less patriotic enthusiasm on Abby's part, they all took passage for America.

Boston, theoretically, at least — for she never lived there again — always held first place in Abby's heart. But while she delighted in the manners of the French women, and in the beauty and charm of the 'ladies of Philadelphia,' something deep within her soul — perhaps her unadulterated English inheritance — responded to the appeal of Old England, despite the occasional discomforts of that difficult period in Anglo-American relations. We get the impression that those four formative years in Paris and London had left her more or less maladjusted to New York, a city holding no early associations to endear it.

PART III
THE REPUBLICAN COURT
NEW YORK, 1788-1808



CHAPTER XXIV

'SUCH A SAMENESS AND SUCH A TOSSING TO AND FRO'

MR. and Mrs. Adams took passage from Portsmouth on a packet commanded by a certain high-handed skipper named Callihan. Colonel Smith and lady sailed from Falmouth a few days later, but were the first to reach home. While held at Portsmouth by the malingering Callihan, Mrs. Adams writes to her daughter: 'April the 2d, and the anniversary of the birth of my dear grandson, whom I am half distracted to see again.' Like a post-war traveler, Mrs. Adams is pained to discover that 'The Bath hotel is totally changed from what it was when we were here three years ago, even in price, for with worse things, it is still more extravagant. Just before we set out, Col. Trumbull brought Col. Smith's letter, written at Bath, and the two letters of recall, the day after the fair, be sure; they who posted and sent them must have thought so at the time.' Mrs. Adams thinks it not improbable 'that by the time Colonel Smith gets halfway home, he may be appointed to Lisbon; yet I own this is a circumstance I should not rejoice at. It would distress me to have you so far from me, and the terrors of the climate would add to my anxiety. But these are mere conjectural evils, of which you know I am not very fond.

'How is my dear, sweet boy? I think of him by day, and dream of him by night. . . . I hope his teeth are quite through. . . . I don't like the idea that he will forget me. O, what a relief would his sportive little pranks have been to me, in the tedious hours of waiting, — waiting for winds, for captain, for vessel. I fear all my patience will be exhausted. . . .

'I took only a few books, and a little sewing, all of which were exhausted in one week. Let me hear from you, my dear child, how you are like to be accommodated, and the name of the packet and captain. We have written to Callihan, but I know he will take his own time, and at the same time assure you it shall be yours. I think he might get to the Downs, if he would exert himself. . . . Your pappa reads Mr. Necker's last publication upon
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the importance of religious opinions, which he likes very much; and I amuse myself in perusing a book Mr. Dilly sent me as a present, called "Mentoria," written by a Mrs. Murray, who is preceptress to the Princess Amelia.' Perhaps neither would prove an adequate cure for loneliness to-day.

Two months later, poor Mrs. Adams is still at sea, 'encompassed with turbulent waves.' The servants as ever were broken reeds. The good Esther, who had accompanied them everywhere, was especially inconsiderate, for 'yesterday at five, she had a daughter, a poor little starvling, but with special lungs. I had for the first time in my life to dress the little animal, who looked buried in its clothes. If we had been favored with a fair wind, we should have got home before this matter took place. Briesler has been much the sickest person on board ship. I expected him to have been half nurse, instead of which, he has wanted constant nursing. I hope and pray, I may never again go to sea: of all places, it is the most disagreeable, such a sameness, and such a tossing to and fro.'

Abby and the Colonel have had better luck. After five weeks at sea on the *Lucretia*, they find themselves, though becalmed, 'within a few hours sail of New York.' This unusually short voyage had included a stop at Halifax, 'situated like Haverhill [habitat of Aunt Shaw] upon the side of a hill,' where the Colonel dined with the Governor. The William Smiths had some bizarre fellow passengers. Abby's pen touches them off so deftly that we are intrigued, though we shall probably never learn the identity of 'Mr. and Mrs. T——'

'We were in all six cabin passengers. I wrote you from Fal-mouth of a Mr. and Mrs. T——; he is a native of Maryland, sent early to England for his education; but it is not easy to discover that this was the motive of his visit, unless to be thoroughly knowing in the career of New Market, Brooks, and every species of gambling, extravagance, and dissipation, was the education intended for him; he is a Lieutenant of the British Navy, was on board the *Somerset*, and a prisoner in Boston during the war. Three years since he ran off with, and married the daughter of the Admiral, a step which I believe every person but herself, thinks she has much cause to repent of. It is said he has run through his fortune, and is now much in advance. They
are

are upon a visit to his father in Maryland; and strange as it may appear, she seems greatly attached to him. I never saw two persons, who excite in my mind so much surprise.'

That attractive and apparently highly casual young Irishman, who had 'looked enquiring,' but was monopolized by Mrs. Bingham, was another fellow passenger. 'Lord Mountmorris was another singular character; his going to America was the decision of half an hour; he wished us a pleasant passage when we went on board the packet at three o'clock, and before four o'clock, came himself with his luggage, for America. It was his intention to have gone to New York, but an invitation from the Governor, to spend a few months with him at Halifax, detained him there. The master of the ship was very young, unacquainted with the coast of America, obstinate and positive in his opinions, and having but little experience. The surgeon, as ignorant a young man, as perhaps, ever practised his profession; coarse and rough in his manners. . . . We were silent upon most occasions, as we could not join in the conversation, which was engrossed by some of the gentlemen, upon such topics as we were happy not to have been acquainted with'; — vulgar gentlemen, we fear, with Restoration taste in jokes — 'we should have been happy, could we have retired, but that was impossible. I shall rejoice when we are landed safely in New York.'

CHAPTER XXV

A DOCUMENT KNOWN AS THE CONSTITUTION BECOMES POPULAR TABLE TALK

THAT wish was soon granted. Abby's next letter contains news of their arrival: 'Colonel Smith's friend, Mr. McCormick, came on board and conducted us to his house, where I have been treated with great kindness and attention. My mamma and Miss Margaret Smith came to town on Friday, and on Sunday I went over to Long Island, to visit them. It is a family where affection and harmony prevail. My time, since my arrival, has been wholly occupied in receiving visits and accepting invitations. I have dined at General Knox's; Mrs. K. has improved much in her appearance. The General is not half so fat as he was.' Did Gilbert Stuart paint him when he was less fat? one wonders.

'Yesterday we dined at Mr. ——'s in company with the whole *corps diplomatique*; The dinner was *à la mode Française*, and exhibited more of European taste than I expected to have found. Mr. Guardoqui was as chatty and sociable as his countryman Del Campo; Lady Temple, civil; Sir John Temple more of a gentleman than I ever saw him. The French minister is a handsome and apparently polite man; the Marchioness his sister, the oddest figure eyes ever beheld; there is so much said of and about her, and so little known, that I cannot pretend to form any kind of judgment. She speaks English a little.' This eccentric lady was Madame de Brehan, a sister of the Count de Moustier, who evidently exerted herself more to please the sterner sex. Mr. Jefferson, for one, seems to have been much taken with her. During her stay she painted several portraits of Washington.

'Congress are sitting; but one hears little more of them, than if they were inhabitants of a newly discovered planet. The President [Cyrus Griffin] is said to be a worthy man; his lady is a Scotch woman, with the title of Lady Christina Griffin; we dine there next Tuesday.'

We hear again of the unblushing Paradise family who are
British

British or American as may be: 'Mr. and Mrs. Paradise, embarked in the last French packet for France, both of them as insane as ever; they had heard of the death of their daughter, and pretended that this was the cause of their return to Europe, but I am told they found their estate more productive than they expected, and are going back to bring action against Mr. L——.'

'We have taken a house upon Long Island at Jamaica, twelve miles from the city; it is pleasantly situated, and has a good garden, with about fifty acres of land. I thought I had no local attachments, but I find a strong *penchant* towards your city; but' — Abby realizes that her angle of vision has changed — 'I do not give a preference, lest I might be disappointed were I to visit Boston at this time. I fear that you have been detained in England longer than you expected, perhaps, by the receipt of the letters Col. Smith forwarded from Bath to my father. Mr. Jay was very much surprised that the gentleman to whom he entrusted them, should have kept them so long after his arrival.

'We are treated here with great politeness, civility, and friendship. We were invited to dine with the Governor [Clinton], which was a very particular favor. He nor his family neither visit, or are visited by, any families either in public or private life. He sees no company, and is not much beloved. His conduct in many respects is censured, perhaps unjustly. To me he appears one whose conduct and motives of action are not to be seen through upon a slight examination. The part he has taken upon the subject of the new Constitution is much condemned, but I do not believe that he acts or thinks without some *important* motives. Mrs. Clinton is not a showy, but a kind, friendly woman. She has five daughters, and one son; the second daughter is about fourteen years old, and as smart and sensible a girl as I ever knew — a zealous politician, and a high anti-Federalist.' This zealous politician of fourteen was Cornelia, who afterwards married Edmond Genêt.

'General and Mrs. Knox have been very polite to us. Mrs. Knox is much altered from the character she used to have. She is neat in her dress, attentive to her family, and very fond of her children. But her size is enormous' — the obesity seems to have
been

been contagious — ‘I am frightened when I look at her; I verily believe that her waist is as large as three of yours, at least.

‘Sir John Temple has taken upon himself very singular airs respecting us. Lady Temple called upon me, at a very late hour after we arrived; but Sir J. has not visited Col. Smith, and says to others that he does not know in what manner to behave to Col. Smith, because he does not know how he took leave, whether it was a gracious reception that he met with.’

Perhaps the American-born Sir John, a returned Tory, recently made emissary to the land he had forsworn, was merely engrossed in writing letters to Congress about a certain ‘small box of tea’ — traditional Anglo-American bone of contention — upon which he was being charged ‘a most outrageous duty.’

‘I returned Lady Temple’s visit by a card, without asking for her, which she complains of. I respect Lady Temple, and as it is probable we shall often meet at a third place, I wish to be upon civil terms with her — particularly as she has often expressed a regard for me * * * * [the annoying asterisks are Caroline’s.] Nor will I exchange visits with any lady, where my husband is not received with equal attention.

‘I hear that my father is chosen a delegate for Congress the next year. I hope he will accept, for, independent of my wish that he should not retire from public business, I think his presence in Congress would do a great deal towards reforming the wrong sentiments and opinions that many are biased by. . . . It is said he must come and be President the next year. . . .

‘Every body is looking forward to the establishment of the new Constitution. To me, I confess, the consequences are problematical, and should any one or more States continue to oppose it, melancholy will be the scenes which ensue, I fear. We expect to get settled in our house at Jamaica next week. I was upon a visit to Col. Smith’s family the last week. I left your grandson in care of his grandmamma. He has grown surprisingly, but does not yet go alone. I endeavor to make him recollect his grandpapa and mamma [William Steuben is now fourteen months old] and he seems to remember your goodness to him.

‘Col. Smith desires me to present his duty, and affectionate congratulation upon your arrival. He will write soon himself.’

After a passage of eight weeks, poor Mrs. Adams arrives in
Boston

Boston with seven 'whitloes' upon her hands, probably the result of a prolonged diet of salt food.

'My first inquiry of Mr. Knox, who came on board as soon as we made the light-house, was after my dear son and daughter; and by him I had the happiness to learn of your safe arrival.

'The newspapers have no doubt informed you of our gracious reception. The Governor was for escorting us to Braintree in his coach and four, attended by his light horse; and even Braintree was for coming out to Milton Bridge to meet us, but this we could by no means assent to. Accordingly, we quitted town privately; your pappa one day, and I the next. But we have come into a house not half repaired, and I own myself most sadly disappointed. In heighth and breadth, it feels like a wren's house. We have had such a swarm of carpenters, masons, farmers, as have almost distracted me — everything all at once, with miserable assistance. In short, I have been ready to wish I had left all my furniture behind. The length of the voyage and heat of the ship greatly injured it; some we cannot get up. But I will not tire you with a recital of all my troubles.

'I hope soon to embrace you, my dear children, in Braintree; but be sure you wear no feathers, and let Col. Smith come without heels to his shoes, or he will not be able to walk upright. We have for my comfort, six cows, without a single convenience for a dairy. But you know there is no saying nay.' (To 'Sir,' we presume.)

'I will not tell you your brother is here, because he has written to you. But I must leave off, or you will think me as bad as Esther.'

Soon Pappa offers Abby a little advice — a commodity he was always willing to part with — concerning his son-in-law's future. A lawyer himself, Mr. Adams would like to see the Colonel restored to that career from which Major Pitcairn's shot withdrew him. First Pappa congratulates himself upon the virtues of his three sons.

'I am happy to hear from all quarters a good character of all your brothers. The oldest [John Quincy] has given decided proofs of great talents, and there is not a youth of his age whose character is fairer in point of morals or conduct. Thomas is as fine a youth as either of the three, if a spice of fun in his composition

position should not lead him astray. Charles wins the heart, as usual, and is the most a gentleman of them all' — also, judging from his miniature, the best to look upon of the three.

'You, my dear daughter, are in new scenes, which require new duties. Mr. Smith's mother has a right to all the filial respect, affection, and attention, that you can show her; and his brothers and sisters you ought to consider as your own.

'I wish to be informed, as fully as may be with propriety, of Mr. Smith's views. My desire would be to hear from him at the bar, which, in my opinion, is the most independent place on earth. A seeker of public employment is the most unhappy of all men. . . . Mr. Smith's merit and services entitle him to expect employment under the public; and I know him to be a man of too much spirit as well as honor, to solicit with the smallest degree of meanness for any thing. But I would not be dependent; I would have a resource. There can be none better than the bar. I hope my anxiety for his and your welfare has not betrayed me into any improper expressions, or unbecoming curiosity.

'You may be anxious, too, to know what is to become of me. At my age, this ought not to be a question; but it is. [Again, Mr. Adams, you are no prophet] I will tell you, my dear child, in strict confidence, that it appears to me that your father does not stand very high in the esteem, admiration, or respect of his country. In the course of a long absence his character has been lost, and he has got quite out of circulation. The public heart and the public voice seem to have decreed to others every public office that he can accept of with consistency, or honor, or reputation; and no other alternative is left for him, but private life at home, or to go again abroad. The latter is the worst of the two; but you may depend upon it, you will hear of him on a trading voyage to the East Indies, or to Surinam, or Essequibo, before you will hear of his descending as a public man beneath himself.' From which we understand that Pappa will not consider less grandeur or authority than that to which he has been accustomed.

Abby answers warmly and proudly in behalf of her Friend: 'Last Thursday I had the pleasure of receiving my dear papa's kind letter. I thank you, sir, for your solicitude respecting my friend and his future pursuits. As yet, I believe, he has
formed

formed no determination respecting his future career. At the bar there are so many persons already established by a course of practice, who are known in the State by common report, that there is but little encouragement for one who by long absence has been lost in public view. There is a strong propensity in the people of this country, to displace the absent by those who are present.' For if Pappa will cast reflections upon William, he must expect the fate of other dwellers in glass houses. 'A few combining accidental circumstances may bring a man into notice; he will, without any extraordinary exertions on his own part, rise in the opinion of the people, the enthusiasm catches like wild-fire, and he is in the popular voice more than mortal. . . . I think I can, in our own State, recollect a few instances of this kind. . . . With respect to yourself, my dear sir, I do not quite agree with you. It is true that absence may have erased from the minds of many, your services; but it will not take long to renew the remembrance of them. You have, in a late pretended friend, a real rival. The attention lately shown you was the highest proof of policy, grounded upon *fear*, that could have been given; it was intended to blind the popular eye, (perhaps it may for a time,) but every person of any discernment saw through the veil.

'The general voice has assigned the presidentship to General Washington, and it has been the opinion of many persons that the vice-presidentship would be at your option. I confess I wish it, and that you may accept it. But of the propriety of this, you will judge best.' For Pappa did not always welcome advice, preferring to administer it.

'This State has adopted the Constitution by a majority of three only. There have been great exertions made by the opposers of it, to prejudice the minds of the populace against it. . . . It is now a great question in debate, whether Congress shall remove from New York, and great exertions are making by some of the southern members to get them to return to Philadelphia. Upon this question, I presume that selfish views actuate all who are *violent* upon either side, for I do not see that any material advantage can arise to the country from the local situation of Congress, except such as contribute to the convenience of their residence.'

A letter to her mother continues the social and official annals of New York: 'I am very sorry to hear that you have had so much sickness and so many perplexities to encounter. It increases my desire to be with you. I most ardently wish to see you, sometimes I think I cannot permit this season to pass without gratifying myself; but the inconveniences of travelling are so great in this country, that I am not quite determined.' (She has found that her William is not selfish.) 'Col. Smith wishes to visit General Washington; but if I were to express a strong desire to go eastward, he would not hesitate to undertake the journey as soon as I wished. . . .

'What to say respecting the future governors of this country, I know not. When eleven states have adopted the Constitution, and in reality the Congress ought to have no existence, they are delaying to pass the ordinance by party cabals and intrigues, by disputing where the new Government shall meet. It has now become a matter of party, totally.' The country was going to the dogs then as always.

'We dined to-day at the President's — a company of twenty-two persons, many members of Congress. Had you been present, you would have trembled for your country, to have *seen*, and *heard*, and *observed*, the men who compose its rulers. Very different, I believe, they were in times past. Col. Smith has received a vote of thanks from Congress for the manner in which he conducted the business in Portugal. . . . I do not hear that any new appointments are likely to be made to any foreign power.

'Mr. G. . . . called upon me this morning; he tells me that he saw my father and yourself in Boston. He is just the same precise, formal being he used to be, and speaks so *prettily* that I could not understand him. Mr. George Storer came out last evening to pass Sunday with us. There is a satisfaction in renewing our acquaintance with persons whom we have formerly known; and particularly so to one who is not disposed to acquire new friendships.

'When we arrived in this country I found myself in a land of strangers. There were but two or three persons that I had any knowledge of, and not one that I had any friendship for. I was visited in New York by fifty or sixty ladies; I returned their
visits,

visits, and here the acquaintance ceases. I have visited frequently with some, but with no one shall I ever become intimate.

'I have been several times to New York, and have been treated with as much civility as I had any reason to expect, but there is no family where I can make a home, and go with freedom and unreserve; so that I believe I shall pass most of my time at home, to which I find myself daily more and more attached. I have as much society as I wish in our own family, and to me it is more agreeable than any other I could find.'

In this confession of a daughter to her mother lies the keynote to Abby's character and temperament. Her quality was delicate, sensitive, self-effacing. She was not — like her parents and her husband — adapted to the touch-and-go contacts of social life. To the strenuous social activities of the 'Republican Court,' overlaying as it did a condition of political excitement, readjustment, shifting standards and ideas, she was unsuited both by natural type and experience. A period that was a stimulant to the ambitious, the excitement-loving, for this sensitive, reserved, innately shy woman held no attraction. She had been bred in the stable society of the Old World, in Colonial Boston, in Georgian England; and in that atmosphere of the fixed and permanent she was happiest, most herself.

'You would not be pleasantly situated in New York,' her letter continues, 'unless my father were President of Congress. If you will come and spend a few months with us in the country, and pappa go to New York at such times as he must attend Congress, it would make us very happy. But for you to live at lodgings in New York would not do at all. You would not be much pleased with the society. They are quite enough dissipated. Public dinners, public days and private parties may take up a person's whole attention if they attend to them all. The President of Congress gives a dinner one or two or more days every week to twenty persons, gentlemen and ladies. Mr. Jay, I believe, gives a dinner almost every week. Besides the *corps diplomatique* on Tuesday evenings, Miss Van Berkel and Lady Temple see company; on Thursdays, Mrs. Jay and Mrs. Laforey, the wife of the French Consul; on Fridays, Lady Christina, the *Presidentess*; and on Saturdays, Mrs. Secretary——.

Pappa

Pappa knows her, and to be sure, she is a curiosity.' . . . The home of the obese but hospitable Knox-family on Broadway was also the scene of much gaiety.

'I am pleased to find that my politics meet with my father's approbation. I hear from many persons, the place of Vice President, or Chief Justice, assigned to him. Many persons consider the latter as the most respectable situation. Mr. Jay has also been mentioned for both, and I suppose every state has assigned every office that is to be created, to persons belonging to themselves. Mr. B — came out the other day, and dined with us. What an old fop! Cutting writes volumes of speculation to Col. Smith, upon the politics of Europe, and I fear will speculate with himself until he is ruined for any station in his own country.'

There were disillusionments, too, concerning those honors due the Colonel. Abby has come to realize that 'Professions are much easier made than fulfilled. The maxim of the present time is, "if you can be of service to me in promoting my views, I will give you my assistance in yours." But I am not surprised at these things, for I am vain enough to think I can see as far into persons' characters, sentiments, and motives as most ladies of my age and experience. . . . My father's idea of returning to the bar is what I should expect from him.' But Abby cannot think of Pappa as stepping down. 'I presume the smaller parts of the practice would be left to young practitioners. . . . It is a profession which I do venerate, and hope one day to see all my brothers, if it is their choice, pursue this profession, making respectable figures in it. And, if it is not looking too far forward, I would hope that my son might yet become a pupil of his grandfather's.' And in a sense John Adams Smith—not yet arrived but on the way—*did* become a sort of legal disciple, a correspondence-school pupil of Pappa's.

'It is a great amusement to me writing to my friends. I do not find that time lessens the painfulness of a separation. You have been very good in writing me, and yet when I do not get a letter for several weeks, I grow impatient. . . . I am much obliged by your request to have my dear boy with you this winter, but this is a separation I cannot think of. He is a great amusement to me, and becomes daily more engaging.'

After

After all, it was the *début* of that future attorney, his namesake, that caused Mr. Adams to consent to the sacrifice of sparing his own Abigail for the event.¹

'BRAINTREE, *November 11, 1788*

'MY DEAR CHILD:

'Our anxiety for you, in your present circumstances and situation among strangers, (though we doubt not you have many friends,) has prevailed upon me to make a great sacrifice, in consenting to your mother's journey to Long Island.

'I am kindly obliged to Col. Smith and to you, for your many invitations, and I have a great desire to see you, your friends, and even your situation. But as long as this political squall shall last I can scarcely lie asleep or sit still without censure, much less ride journeys on visits to my friends.

'If my future employment in public depends on a journey to New York, or on the feather of being for a week or a day President of Congress, I will never have any other than private employments while I live.

'I find men and manners, principles and opinions, much altered in this country since I left it. Gen. Knox will tell you, when you see him, how completely I am initiated into the order of Cincinnatus, without any vote of the Society. He is the same sensible and agreeable man as when I formerly knew him.'

Mr. Adams wrote to the Colonel too, that day, a letter full of his quaint humor showing the side upon which he and his son-in-law were companionable.

'BRAINTREE, *Nov. 11th, 1788*

'DEAR SIR:

'I was much obliged to you for a letter by Mr. Nesbit of Philadelphia, and am very sorry that I could not have more of his company. I wished for you when he was here because you could never have a better opportunity of seeing your old military friends. We had a review of the militia upon my farm; and a battle that threw down all my fences. I wish, however, that Governor Hancock and General Lincoln would not erect their military reputations upon the ruins of my stone walls. Me-
thinks

¹ John Adams Smith was born November 10, 1788.

thinks I hear you whisper, it won't be long ere they erect their civil and political characters upon some other of your ruins. If they do, I shall acquiesce, for the public good: Lincoln I esteem very much: the other, I respect as my governor.

'You have many friends here, who constantly inquire after your health and happiness. They all would be glad to see you, but none of them so sincerely rejoiced as your affectionate,

'JOHN ADAMS.'

CHAPTER XXVI

PAPPA CONSENTS TO BE VICE-PRESIDENT, AND COLONEL SMITH AND LADY ASSOCIATE WITH PRESIDENT WASHINGTON AND HIS

THE Constitution, concerning which Abby had suffered such grave doubts, was signed by Washington September 17, 1787. It went into effect in 1788, and on March 3, 1789, John Adams began his term as Vice-President under Washington. When he stood up to take the oath of office, he was clad from head to foot in 'garments whose material was the product of the soil,' the proud present of the city of Hartford. But Mr. Adams in retrospect rather deplored this patriotic costume.

The Vice-Presidency brought the Adams family to New York, where they found a 'suitable' home at Richmond Hill, a region now included in Greenwich Village. This house, which gave so much pleasure to Mrs. Adams, was later occupied by Aaron Burr at the time of his duel with Hamilton. In 1789, Richmond Hill was a region of country homes, a mile and a half from the city. Mrs. Adams informs her sister that, 'In front of the house the noble Hudson rolls his majestic waves, bearing upon his bosom innumerable small vessels. . . . On one side of it a grove of pines and oaks and fit for contemplation (!)'

Seventeen-Eighty-Nine was a gay year for the Colonel and Abby. The Colonel officiated at Washington's inauguration, and of course, at the Inauguration Ball, on May 7, 1789. On September 26th, Washington made his former aide Marshal of the District of New York and from the records in his diary we learn that once a week, at least, 'Colonel Smith and Lady' dined with the President in distinguished company. Governor Clinton and Lady, Citizen Genêt, as he called himself, and of course Vice-President Adams and Lady were frequent guests.

On October 7th, we read in Washington's journal that, in company with Colonel Smith and Mr. Adams, he visited the Prince Nurseries at Flushing and that on their return they met Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Smith at Haarlem, where they dined together at Captain Marriner's Tavern. Marriner's Tavern was

none

none other than the lovely old colonial house, generally called the Jumel Mansion, because it was for many years the home of that ruthless adventuress with whom Aaron Burr contracted a mercenary marriage in his old age. A pity that it is not more popularly known as Washington's Headquarters, for it was there that both Washington and Colonel Smith were quartered in 1776 at the time of the battle of Haarlem Heights. There, too, according to tradition, Nathan Hale volunteered for that heroic service which, a few days later, caused his death.

On the last night of 1789, President Washington gave a small party to see the New Year of 1790 in, and Vice-President Adams and Lady, Colonel Smith and Lady, and Baron Steuben were among the guests.

That year Abby had not only her father and mother near her in New York; but John Quincy also came to visit them. In his diary he records taking a perilous voyage from Boston to New York, the anticipated thrill of which was passing the awesome rocks of Hell Gate, 'about eight miles from New York. No vessel pretends to pass this dangerous place against the tide nor in the night.'

Upon landing, John Quincy walked to his father's house at Richmond Hill, a winsome walk, God wot, in that day. That night 'The Vice-President and family dined at home'—although afterwards 'Colonel Smith and my brother went to the play.' This was Charles, who was perhaps already in the throes of his love affair with Sally, that sister of the Colonel's who had particularly impressed John Quincy a few years before.

But Abby did not long enjoy the pleasure of having her parents within driving distance. In 1790, the seat of government was removed from New York to Philadelphia. Mrs. Adams describes her new home in a characteristic letter to her daughter.

'Bush Hill, as it is called, though there remains neither bush nor shrub upon it . . . the grand and sublime I left at Richmond Hill . . . The Schuylkill is no more like the Hudson than I to Hercules. By accident the vessel with our furniture had arrived the day before, and Briesler was taking in the first load in a house all green-painted, the workmen were there with brushes in their hands. . . .'

Life soon became very hectic for Mrs. Adams who was ill herself.

herself. 'On Saturday evening we got our furniture in. On Sunday, Thomas was laid up with rheumatism. On Monday I was obliged to give Louisa an emetic. Tuesday, Mrs. Briesler was taken with her old pain in her stomach. On Thursday, Polly was seized with a violent pleuritic fever.' And, despite being 'twice bled and a blister upon her side, has not been out of bed since.' Truly, a valuable houseful of servants. To add to this, every day from eleven to three the house is filled with ladies and gentlemen. A caller assures Mrs. Adams that 'she is much better off than Mrs. Washington will be when she arrives, for the President's house is not likely to be completed this year. And when all is done, it is not Broadway.' (Almost it gives us a shock, that sentence from Mrs. Adams!) 'If New York wanted any revenge for the removal, the citizens might be glutted were they to come here. Every article is almost double in price.' The fine London gowns had suffered, too, in transportation: 'The vessel sprung a leak and one trunk got wet a foot high by which means I have several gowns spoiled. The one you worked is most damaged.' We feel sorry for that. Abby's embroidery must have been as delicate and lovely as herself. Philadelphia society and Philadelphia ladies were words to conjure with in those days. The Duke de Rochefoucauld observes in his account of his American travels: 'I have seen balls on the President's birthday where the splendor of the room, the variety and the richness of the dresses did not suffer by comparison with Europe; and it must be acknowledged that the beauty of the ladies has the advantage in comparison. Even when they grow old they are still handsome, and it would be no exaggeration to say that in the numerous assemblies of Philadelphia it is impossible to meet with a plain woman.' It is disturbing to read on and discover that 'The young men for the most part seem to belong to another species,' but perhaps that is only a Frenchman's verdict. The dazzling Mrs. Bingham of London days was in her native Philadelphia now. Evidently her beauty had not suffered from undue pursuit of pleasure, as Abigail in a puritanical moment feared it might.

'I will spend a very dissipated winter if I accept one half of the invitations I receive,' Mrs. Adams observes pensively, 'particularly to the routs of tea and cards.'

Mrs.

Mrs. Adams was always popular. 'Sir,' we fear, was not invariably. Abby, who was clear-sighted, commented upon this fact to John Quincy, whose loyalty will not admit it:

'You ask whence arises the unpopularity of the vice-president. There is no such unpopularity here. . . . Excepting the President, there is not a man in the United States of so respectable popularity. What it may be in the distant states' (New York, for example) 'I know not. But connection with a man in an eminent station, who acts upon principles of patriotism and integrity, is a real injury rather than an advantage. I should rather have been surprised had it *not* deprived Colonel Smith of an office to which his merits had given him an indisputable title. . . .' Indeed John Adams himself believed that Colonel Smith had suffered from his relationship to him.

'I sincerely sympathize with you upon the removal of our parents from New York. But Charles will remain with you. His disposition was always amiable, and his manners calculated to make him friends. He has lately imbibed a thirst for science, which will render him as respectable as he is agreeable. . . . I beg you to present my affectionate regards to Col. Smith, and remind your sons that they have an uncle at a distance who loves them, though they remember him not.'

In September of that year a little son who did not survive was born, Thomas Hollis Smith, named for their English friend, Thomas Brand Hollis, so often mentioned in the letters.

In 1790, Colonel Smith served as Secretary of the Society of the Cincinnati of which he was one of the founders. This was the beginning of several years' service for that organization. Late in the year, with that suddenness so disconcerting to methodical New England, he returned to England.

In a letter from Colonel Platt to Samuel Webb dated December 8, 1790, we learn that 'Colonel Smith took passage in the last Packet for England & previously resigned his office of Marshall.' For Sam had his eye on that office.

From Philadelphia John Adams sends forth affectionate misgiving. The Colonel had evidently found it simpler not to confide in Pappa-in-law (who always knew best). The 'business' referred to by Abby was probably connected with the
purchasing

purchasing and selling of the recently released land grants in New York State. In this he was successful, landing two very large fish, indeed, an English peer, Lord Pulteney, and it is said, the King of Hanover.

We feel always indulgent toward Pappa's weaknesses, but it does just flash across the mind that while 'Sir' visualized himself as President, he did not hesitate to advise the safe small emoluments of the law for others.

The doubt motive appears in the first sentences:

'I have not had an opportunity to write you till now, since the departure of your Colonel Smith for England. I presume that this voyage was undertaken on mature deliberation, and wish it may prove exactly to his satisfaction and his interest. The state of solitude, however disagreeable, should be rendered tolerable to you when you recollect the many years of separation which fell to the lot of your parents, in infinitely more gloomy times, and with prospects more dismal and disconsolate. Your children are a trust which will employ your mind.' In his loving concern for his Abby, he does not like to have the Colonel crossing the ocean without her, yet undeniably he enjoys picturing for her that 'retirement from the world to which the absence of a husband gives not only an excuse, but a peculiar grace.'

The early spring of 1791 finds the Colonel still in Europe, where he receives affectionate letters from Mr. and Mrs. Adams, informing him that the appointment of Supervisor of the State has been conferred upon him by Washington. We note a certain distrust of his son-in-law's mental and physical agility in Pappa's advice: 'This place, I presume, is well worth your acceptance, as it will be a decent and comfortable provision for yourself and family, while it will be an honorable and useful employment. I am therefore anxious that you should have the earliest notice of it, and return without loss of time.'

Mrs. Adams writes in a different vein. The Secretary of the Treasury has stated, 'that it was the President's intention to unite the office of Supervisor and Inspector for the State of New York, and not to divide the state, as he will be obliged to do in some states where there are many ports of entry, consequently the salary will be something handsome, and well worth your acceptance,

acceptance, though the duties of the office will be proportionately arduous. I thought it would be of importance to you to get sight of the bill as soon as possible. . . . Congress closed their session on the fourth of March. . . . The accession of Vermont and Kentucky are two additional pillars to the noble building.'

Mrs. Adams had a visit from little John Smith that winter. 'We grow fonder of him every day,' she writes. 'He has spent an hour this afternoon driving his grandfather around with a willow stick.'

Another day, after dining with the Washingtons, she writes, 'The President was more than usually social. He asked very affectionately after you and the children, and at table picked the sugar plums from a cake and requested me to take them for master John.'

A favored little boy, Johnnie Smith! The first President of the United States picking sugar plums from the governmental cake, and the second, a docile hobby-horse, driven about the stately colonial drawing-room with a willow stick!

The summer of 1791 found the Colonel home again, per Pappa-in-law's request, not only supervising New York State, but buying himself whole townships and counties up-State. These lands — enormous tracts of wilderness amounting to 150,000 acres in central New York — had just been secured by Governor Clinton for the State by treaty with the Indians. Of the twenty townships, Colonel Smith purchased five, Eaton, Madison, Hamilton, Lebanon, and Smyrna in the present counties of Madison and Chenango. A little later he bought the easterly portion of what is known as the Chenango Triangle, including the townships of Smithsville, Oxford, and Greene. Four of these were purchased for Lord Pulteney.

But the Smith and Adams families crossed the Atlantic as casually, and almost as often, as if it were the day of five-day steamers instead of five-week packets. So we are not especially surprised the following year to find the Colonel again setting sail for England. This time he whisked Abby and the boys off with him.

Before they went, Abby had an affectionate letter from John Quincy asking the Colonel to buy law books for him in London, and

and another from Pappa, pardonably peevish because credit for some of his good deeds is being given to Mr. Jay.

'There has lately been published extracts from a Journal of Brissot, in which, as upon many other occasions, there has appeared a disposition to give to Mr. Jay as much of the honor of the peace as possible, and to take it away from your pappa. Mr. Jay is represented as insisting on an acknowledgement of our independence antecedently to treating, and as bringing me over to his opinion. Mr. Jay's commission was in autumn of 1782. In July, 1781, more than a year earlier, and indeed before Mr. Jay had anything to do with peace, before the commission was issued by Congress, in which Mr. Jay was united with me in the negotiations — the enclosed letters were written by me to the Count De Vergennes, received by him, and transmitted by me to Congress, and now stand recorded in the office of the Secretary of State. By these you may judge whether Mr. Jay brought me over to his opinion, or whether I brought him over to mine.

'God forbid that I should deny Mr. Jay's merit in that business, or diminish his fame. All I desire is, that my children, if they should ever have any tenderness for their father's character, may know where to look for the means of maintaining it. Show these letters to Col. Smith and to your brother Charles. And if either think it worth while to show them to Mr. Webster, in confidence, they have my leave to do it.' More than his leave! The Colonel had several such permissions from his father-in-law.

From London Colonel Smith sent English papers to General Gates and news of the gathering revolution, now involving their old comrade Lafayette.

'Tomorrow being the anniversary of their Confederation is big with the fate of the Jacobins or Lafayette. You will in the paper notice his letter to the King and the National Assembly. It was doubtless a bold step and places him in a peculiarly hazardous situation. I am rather apprehensive that in denouncing the Jacobins he has not actually calculated their numbers. Their friends here say they are the majority of the Nation and the real directors of the National will. If so our friend the Marquis must "go by the wall." From accounts received there are at least 30,000 men on the march to Paris in
contradiction

contradiction to the act of the Constitution and the orders of the King. Their ostensible object is to Celebrate the Anniversary of the Constitution (but mark the end of it!) if tomorrow passes without bloodshed it will be singular. France will probably be distracted with a bloody civil war. . . . The affairs of the Country appear to have been very badly administered by the present National Assembly . . . The declaration of war on their part was undoubtedly premature. I therefore conclude their time would have been better spent in rendering their Domestick affairs respectable than . . . apparently to place themselves in the wrong by being ostensibly the aggressors . . . points like these have a great effect on the minds of a people . . . But the die is cast. They have cried "havock and let slip the dogs of war." It is said here that the Jacobins contemplate an absolute removal of the King from the throne, or such a change in the Constitution as to deprive him entirely of the Veto . . . but I will no longer pet myself or plague you with such unpleasant details. Indeed I think I am wrong in holding this scene up to view. It may interfere with the contemplation of much more pleasing subjects . . . I hope you may live long and be happy, and your enemies know it. For myself I grow almost too sick of *men* and things to enjoy Society, and the publick and private scenes in my own country, particularly what passed at Philadelphia, last winter relative to the intrigues of great men, urge me to pray — and I hope my prayer will be granted —

Place me ye powers in some obscure retreat,
O keep me innocent, make others great —'

'Mrs. Smith & the Gallant Boys join in most affectionate regards to you & Mrs. Gates.'

The Colonel's real estate speculations were not carried on without difficulty. International finance was little organized at that time. His affairs were in the charge of Ben Walker, Washington's former aide during his absence, but despite sufficient capital in securities, there were financial embarrassments as this letter, rather a sad one, shows.

'My

'June 22nd, 1792. ARGYLE STREET, LONDON

'MY DEAR WALKER —

'I yesterday received your two letters. I must again thank you for your attention and care. Enclosed is the second bill on Daniel McCormick for 8,889 dollars, first of the same set being forwarded by the packet. It gives me inexpressible pain that by your acts of friendship in indorsing you should experience any uneasiness in your private affairs, and the situation of others in New York, with whom I have always lived in habits of intimacy, being in the deplorable state you mention distresses me much, even at this distance. God knows what my feelings would have been had I been present.

'The low price of stocks with you astonishes me much, yesterday 22/6 was offered and refused for a large supply of the 6/cent stock. In short I am fully convinced that if I had the stock here which is deposited for my bills, an immediate and satisfactory arrangement could be made, honourable to you and to me, and advantageous to all others concerned; and I doubt not when we close this business I shall be able to make out and arrange something that will aid both you and myself in our passage through this troubled scene, abounding with whirlpools, Eddies and Cross currents. My return, my friend, depends entirely upon you. I cannot leave this until I see my bills paid. When that is done I return. If you have not already done it, lose no time in sending me the stock. . . .

'Their conduct here through the whole of this business has been most surprisingly polite and attentive.

'A friend writes me that Mr. Lewis Pintard and Mr. Boudinot waited on Col. Duer in behalf of Mr. John Pintard, when Duer gave them assurances that Pintard would not suffer by him, for his dependence was upon *my* selling large tracts of land for him which would enable him to extricate himself from all his difficulties. Is the man mad? There can be no other way to account for such assertions. I have no land to sell for Col. Duer, which you know. You also know if I had, with a clear and explicit title, that I would exert myself to do him all the service in my power, but it strikes me as rather unkind that he should mention my name as connected with a business that he has not committed to my care or management.

'Visit

'Visit my dear Mother and family, give them comfort in these gloomy times and tell them I shall do well. Remember me to Mrs. Walker and Give my love to my family and distressed friends

'Yours affectionately,

W. S. SMITH'

Abby also sends her mother a picture of trans-Atlantic conditions: 'Ship loads of poor, distressed, penniless priests and others, are daily landing upon this island; whether they will find hospitality and charity, I know not; for the lowest class of people here can never love the French, and the middling sort of persons do not relish so many Catholics and priests resident amongst them. There are many who endeavor to find excuses for the cruelties which have been committed; they say that the friends of liberty have been betrayed; that supplies have been sent to their enemies; and that the aristocratic party were preparing to enact the same scenes upon the jacobins as have been practiced upon themselves. I think the King and Queen will fall a sacrifice to the fury of the *mobites*, and is it not even better they should than that the people should be annihilated by a general massacre? I saw a lady who was in Paris on the 10th of August, and she heard and saw scenes as shocking as are related by any of the newspapers; they seem to have refined upon the cruelties of the savages. These are confirmations strong of the justice of my father's sentiments upon governments.' Abby wonders what Mr. Jefferson, the professional democrat, 'will say to all these things.'

'My friend has had an invitation from one of the Major Generals and *Marechals de Camp*, to go over and fight for the French, but he declined. It is too uncertain a cause to volunteer in. It is supposed, if the democrats succeed in France, that the aristocrats will, many of them, go to America. The Vicomtede Noailles talks of it; the Marquis will, I dare say, when he gets released; Monsieur la Board thinks of it; they are only waiting to see how the event will terminate to make their decisions.

'Mr. St. John, brother of Mrs. Otto, dined with us last week. He left his father in Paris, and came over with young Madame de Noailles, who was obliged to disguise herself in a sailor's habit, to get away from that land of iniquity.

'I expected to have sent my letter by a private hand, but I believe the gentleman does not go. I shall therefore request Capt. Bunyan's care of this packet. It seems as if I were secluded from all my friends by an insurmountable barrier; not one single line from your pen since last May. Five months! It almost makes me homesick.'

Is there always a Franco-American debt problem? 'The French are somewhat disposed to complain that their good friends, the Americans, do not step forward in their cause. Not one American officer has joined them, nor do they hear one word of comfort from them; their minister is most obnoxious to the Republicans, and he refuses to pay them the debt due them. They will not permit him to quit Paris. One of his friends thinks it not improbable that he will be taken off in some moment of confusion, but I do not believe this.'

'The Marquis is kept a close prisoner by the Austrians. It is said Madame La Fayette is in Holland. It has been said that Monsieur De Tournant is recalled from your Court.' So much had Abby lived in touch with courts that for the moment she forgets that her country is not equipped with one.

Though a good republican, and by no means the royalist the less sincere Jefferson made him out, Pappa also had no scorn for monarchies. Taking pen in hand, he cannot resist advising his absent daughter: 'You are in Europe at a critical moment, more proper perhaps to make useful observations than any which has occurred for centuries. . . . What says my friend Brand Hollis to the French democrats now? If he really loves king-killing, he is like to be satisfied. I own I do not. My faith is immovable that after ever so many trials, the nations of Europe will find that equal laws, natural rights and essential liberties can never be preserved among them without such an unity of the executive power. For myself, I am more anxious to get out of public life than to continue in it. I can say, with infinitely more sincerity than Cæsar, that I have lived enough to glory, however feeble the glimmer. I am not disposed to say with him, that I have lived enough to life, for I should like to live to see the end of the revolutions in Europe, and that will not be these hundred years.'

Then forgetting kings and Cæsars we read next that, 'Capt. Beale

Beale of Squantum has set up, between me and my brother, a new house, the largest and handsomest ever built in this neighborhood.'

Mrs. Adams also writes of the French Revolution to her daughter. 'Poor France,' what a state of confusion and anarchy is it rushing into! I have read Mr. Bush's letter, and though I think he paints high, yet strip it of all its ornament and coloring, it will remain an awful picture of liberty abused, authority despised, property plundered, government annihilated, religion banished, murder, rapine, and desolation scourging the land. I am sorry that my worthy and venerable divine should expose himself, at this late period of his life, to so severe a censure. I love and venerate his character, but think his zeal a mistaken one, and that he is a much more shining character as a divine than politician. To Mr. Hollis, and the rest of our friends, give my regards; I have a love for that same country, and an affection for many of its valuable inhabitants.' Ben Walker must have sent the Colonel's stock by the next 'Packett,' for in December they sailed for home.

In February, 1793, they arrived in New York unannounced, in the best of spirits. 'We avoided informing our friends of our intention,' she writes to her mother, 'knowing that their anxious solicitude for our safety would render them unhappy. We left England the 23rd of December, in the Portland packet, at a season when our friends there thought we were almost out of our senses. But we had a very pleasant passage, not knowing what cold weather was until a day or two before we landed; and for three weeks had such warm weather that we were obliged to sleep with our windows open in the cabin. We have all been very well upon our passage; the children look fine. We had a good captain and our accommodations were excellent; we had four poor expatriated French priests, on their route to Canada, as fellow-passengers, but they did not incommode us, we having two cabins. We had a passage of 45 days, and feel ourselves quite at home again. You would have been amused to have seen the meeting in Dey Street. They could scarce believe their eyes; it was between eight and nine o'clock when we landed. But it is time to tell you the cause of our leaving England, which was the prospect of a war on the ocean in the spring, we did not like

like the idea of crossing it with bullets whizzing round our heads. Some business, also was an inducement.

'England informs France that if they open the navigation of the Scheldt, they shall join the Dutch; this is the ostensible cause for arming, which they are doing with great vigor. But they dread internal commotions, and are fortifying the Tower, preparing to build barracks in the Royal Exchange, have placed a double guard at the Bank; breaking up all societies for reforms of Parliament, and forbidding, by proclamation, the meeting of all societies who call themselves republicans; burning Tom Paine in almost every capital town in England in effigy, with the rights of man in one hand, and a pair of old stays in the other. In short, doing just what he wishes, I presume, making him of more consequence than his own writings could possibly effect.

'Col. Smith sets off on Tuesday for Philadelphia. I shall have a strong inclination to make you a visit, for I must be a visitor until May, as we have no house. We think to take one in the country for the summer. If you were in Philadelphia, I should soon be with you.'

In 1793, political issues became troubled. Mrs. Adams writes to Abigail that the 'National Gazette' is comparing good Mr. Washington to a hyena and a crocodile, and charging him with duplicity and deception. 'The President has not been accustomed to such language,' Mrs. Adams observes with, one feels, undue mildness, 'and his feelings will be wounded, I presume.'

That winter the Colonel and his Lady were living in style at 18 Courtland Street, but found time to visit the Vice-President in Philadelphia. Mrs. Adams was at Braintree on an errand of mercy. Mr. Adams writing to her from Philadelphia as he sets out for New York, gives a picture of the effect of wealth upon our Colonel, who is, Mr. Adams feels, a little too pleased with himself because he made it all without aid from the Government: 'I do not think Abby will go with me. Her husband with his new wealth would not let her go, I suppose, without a coach and four, and such monarchical trumperies I will in the future have nothing to do with. . . . I will never travel but by the stage coach.'

Having

Having relieved himself by this outburst, Mr. Adams confesses, 'But I wish my boys had a little more of his activity. Smith has acquired the confidence of the French ministry and of the better sort of the members of the National Convention, but the executive is too changeable in that country to be depended upon.'

Two letters from Mr. Adams to Abby contain what is probably a very astute analysis of Edmond Genêt, who was making himself conspicuous about this time. Who could have foreseen that the well-behaved French lad he took to see the animals was going to behave in such a spectacular manner in Mr. Adams's country! Young Genêt must have been a natural radical, for he had been brought up in kindly and intimate contact with the King's household. He arrived on our shores, as Mr. Adams has pointed out, burdened with an extraordinary collection of misconceptions — which Mr. Jefferson certainly made no effort to dispel. The first letter is written directly after Genêt's denunciation of Washington for his failure to assist the murderous revolutionists of France, and the President's consequent demand for his recall.

'PHILADELPHIA, *December 14, 1793*

'Mr. Genêt may well be shocked at the Message. It is a thunderbolt. I cannot but feel something like an apology for him, as he was led into some of his enterprises by the imprudence of our fellow-citizens. The extravagant court paid to him by a party, was enough to turn a weak head. . . .

'This party had misled him, and filled his head with prejudices against the President and his Ministers. . . . It is a very difficult thing for a man to go into a foreign country, among strange people, and there act a prompt and sudden part upon a public political theatre, as I have severely felt in France, Holland, and England; and if he does not keep his considering cap always on his head, some party or some individual will be very likely to seduce him into snares and difficulties. This has been remarkably Mr. G.'s unhappy case. . . . The scandalous libel on the President in a New York paper is a proof to me, that foreign politics have had too much secret influence in America.' But recent rustlings of old papers seem to prove that that trail also ended

ended at Mr. Jefferson's door. The 'National Gazette' was Jefferson's organ.

And now for a little grandfatherly advice: 'Present my love to my two dear boys. You have a great charge upon you, my dear child, in the education of these promising children. As they have not had the regular advantages of public schools, your task in teaching them literature must be the more severe.'

The next was written much later after a visit from young Genêt. 'I have seen Mr. Genêt; he made me a visit which I returned. He appeared to be a young gentleman of much ingenuity, lively wit and brilliant imagination, enamoured to distraction with republican liberty, but wholly without experience in any free government; very crude and inaccurate in his ideas of a republic, and as yet totally uninformed of the operations of the human heart and the progress of the passions in public assemblies. You think I can now judge "whether he has a disposition to involve us in a war" or not. What is his *disposition*, or what have been his *intentions*, I know not; but I think it certain, that his *conduct*, if it had not been checked in its career, would infallibly have brought upon us a war with all Europe, except his constituents; with the house of Bourbon, all the great families of France, and all their ecclesiastics and adherents. I think, too, that his forcible resistance to the execution of our laws, his enlistments of men for military service, his endeavors to set our people against their government, are all unjustifiable, and his uniting with a party inexcusable.'

That year Abby lost her grandmother Adams. Pappa writes of it in one of his characteristic letters in which liberty, turtles, and friendly visits rub elbows with death and eternity.

'PHILADELPHIA, January 7, 1794

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

'Colonel Smith spent the evening with me, and presented me with your kind letter of the 29th of December. . . .

'My aged and venerable mother is drawing near the close of a virtuous and industrious life. . . . May I be enabled to fulfil the duties of life, as she has done. I would not exchange her morals, for all the offices, honors, and profits of the world.

'I pray you to present my best thanks to Mrs. Fitch, for her
kind

kind present of a turtle; if it had come here, I could have only given it to the President or some of his Ministers.

'... The cause of liberty, my dear daughter, is sacred. Your father has spent all his life in it, and sacrificed more to it than millions who now inflame the world. But anarchy, chaos, murder, atheism, and blasphemy, are not liberty. The most dreadful tyranny that ever existed upon earth, is called liberty by people who know no more about liberty than the brutes.

'I fear the next post will bring me the melancholy news of my mother's departure to meet my father. Two purer spirits never came within the knowledge of

'Your affectionate father,

'JOHN ADAMS.'

CHAPTER XXVII

RUMORS OF WAR AND THE DÉBUT OF A DAUGHTER

THROUGHOUT 1794 the fear of war hung over America. New York apprehended invasion by water. A letter from Abby to her father in April of that year reveals the general feeling of uneasiness on Manhattan Island.

‘The prospect of a war alarms me much; many persons express their apprehensions respecting the safety of this town in particular, supposing that in case of a war, it would be of great consequence for the British to have possession of it. Our fortifications do not proceed with much rapidity. I cannot but lament that the Baron Steuben has been wholly unnoticed; he, I believe, would be allowed by the best judges to be as capable of the business as those who are honored with the attentions of the President.

‘Do you, my dear sir, flatter yourself that the mission of Mr. Jay will secure to us the blessings of peace? He is to carry the olive branch in one hand, and the sword of defense in the other. I wish the former may soothe, and the latter strike them with terror; but I confess I do not feel very sanguine upon the subject.’

Her father answers immediately: ‘... In the improbable case of a war, it would not be easy to take New York, and it would be still more difficult to keep it. So large a fleet and so numerous an army must be employed, that I see not where the English can obtain them. They are in too much danger at home, to send away their defense to America. . . . I know not who are “honored with the attention of the President;” but if anyone has been to the neglect of the Baron, I am very sorry for it. Mr. Jay is to carry no sword that I know of, offensive or defensive; he is to require justice, and I hope will obtain it: if not, as he is generally thought to be a man of as much political prudence as any in our States, the people will be satisfied that nothing has been omitted by government, which ought to have been done in the way of negotiation.

‘My love to Colonel Smith and the children. Let me entreat
you,

you, my dear, to devote yourself to the education of those promising boys.'

Mr. Adams seems to be apprehensive that they may inherit too much of the Colonel's *joie de vie*. 'Men of pleasure, in all countries, are contemptible beings, he adds piously.'

Mr. Adams's youngest is also in need of guidance. 'Thomas,' he writes to that gallant youth's mother, 'drops in on me evenings. I fear he makes too many visits in families where there are young ladies.'

There are gratifying prospects for John Quincy, the Incorruptible, however. 'The President has it in contemplation to send your son to Holland.'

What Mr. Washington had it in contemplation to do he usually did, and not long afterwards John Quincy found himself appointed American Minister to Holland. On his way he stopped to visit his sister in New York, and we find recorded in his faithful journal an account of a dinner party at the Colonel's hospitable home, in distinguished company — M. Talleyrand, M. Baumetz, a member of the National Assembly of France, and M. de la Colombe, who had been aide to Lafayette.

Thomas Adams — perhaps Pappa did not approve of one of the young ladies — went to Holland with John Quincy. We hope he did not find his older brother too instructive. We may add that Thomas did not succumb to one of those fascinating young ladies of Philadelphia, but chose his wife, Ann Harod, in Haverhill, most probably aided and abetted by Aunt Shaw, that resourceful specialist in matrimony.

Returning that autumn from Braintree to Philadelphia, Mr. Adams stops to make his daughter a visit. Safely arrived at the Capitol, he writes to thank her for a present for which he does not seem entirely grateful:

'I forgot to thank you for your kind present of patriotic manufacture; but I own I am not, at my age, so great an enthusiast, as to wear with much pride, these coarse homely fabrics. I was once proud of an homespun camblet cloak, and used to go to meeting in it at Dr. Cooper's tasty Society; but I own I was not sorry when a thief, by stealing it, furnished me with an excuse for wearing it no more. Those times were very different from these. My Hartford present of Connecticut broadcloth, I
could

could not long endure; and the New York cotton is not yet made up. I am not the less obliged to you, however. I have not yet heard whether your brother Charles has returned from his visit to Steuben.' And the Colonel, active person, is again in Philadelphia, for he dabbled in Quaker City acres also, his friend William Tilghman acting as his agent. 'Colonel Smith is well. My love to William and John, give them a kiss for me, and present them with the blessings of their

'Affectionate grandfather,

'JOHN ADAMS.

'Your mamma, on the 10th of November went to Haverhill, on a visit to your unfortunate and afflicted aunt.' This was Aunt Shaw.

John Quincy, too, from across the Atlantic, regrets 'the painful and unexpected death' of good Uncle Shaw. 'Our Amiable aunt will have need of all her fortitude and all her resignation,' John Quincy observes piously. 'I hope they will not be without their reward.' They were not — especially the resignation. Aunt Shaw, as we know, made swift and noiseless exchange of the quick for the departed long before the news of her bereavement reached John Quincy. .

Mr. Jay still rankles. His name appears in another letter to the Colonel. 'Delicacy towards Mr. Jay will restrain me from publishing in print, at present, any part of these letters, but,' he repeats insinuatingly, 'You may show them in confidence to Mr. Webster, and to Mr. McCormic, if you think it worth the pains.

'By this time, or very soon, I hope to congratulate you and Mrs. Smith on the birth of a daughter. My love to her and my young gentlemen. . . .

'Enclosed is a Grub-street production, fit to amuse you for half an hour.'

It was a girl, as we know — that Caroline who was to be so dear. We hear of her arrival in Mr. Adams's next to Abby, in which he 'Encloses another letter to Mr. Jay of the 10th of August, 1782, which I desire you to file with the others. They will all together sufficiently decide the question, whether Mr. Jay joined Mr. A. or, Mr. A. Mr. Jay, in the project of refusing to treat till we were acknowledged to be Ministers of a Sovereign

ereign Power' — a question of some importance to personal and family feelings, though of very little to the public. 'My love to Mr. Smith, and my little boys, and little girl, whom I long to see — what is her name?'

Abby still hears frequently from John Quincy, whose most intimate communications from now on bear the hall-mark of the public speaker. 'We are once more scattered about the world, as you observe. . . . Our destiny from childhood has been that of wanderers beyond the common lot of men.' Charity Smith, whose engagement has just been announced, comes in for warm approval. Indeed so sensible was John Quincy of the attractions of the Colonel's sisters it is a wonder he did not marry one himself. Later Charity practised — and, we trust, studied — medicine, scandalizing the neighbors by driving about in a 'gig' with a black boy — another Eighteenth Century feminist.

That year Charity married a Mr. Shaw, almost certainly a relative of Uncle Shaw's, and her sister Sally married Charles Adams. A generation later, young William Steuben married the young sister of his Uncle John Quincy's wife. Still later, Caroline de Windt's daughter married a Cranch, a cousin of the uncousinly conspirers against Royall Tyler's happiness. How do genealogists survive disentanglement of the Smith-Adams relationships?

Mr. Adams pays Charles and Sally a little visit, passing through New York on his way to Philadelphia. We presume he traveled per democratic resolution by stage-coach instead of indulging in 'the trumperies of a coach and four.' 'Your new daughter behaves very prettily in her new sphere,' he wrote back to Mrs. Adams.

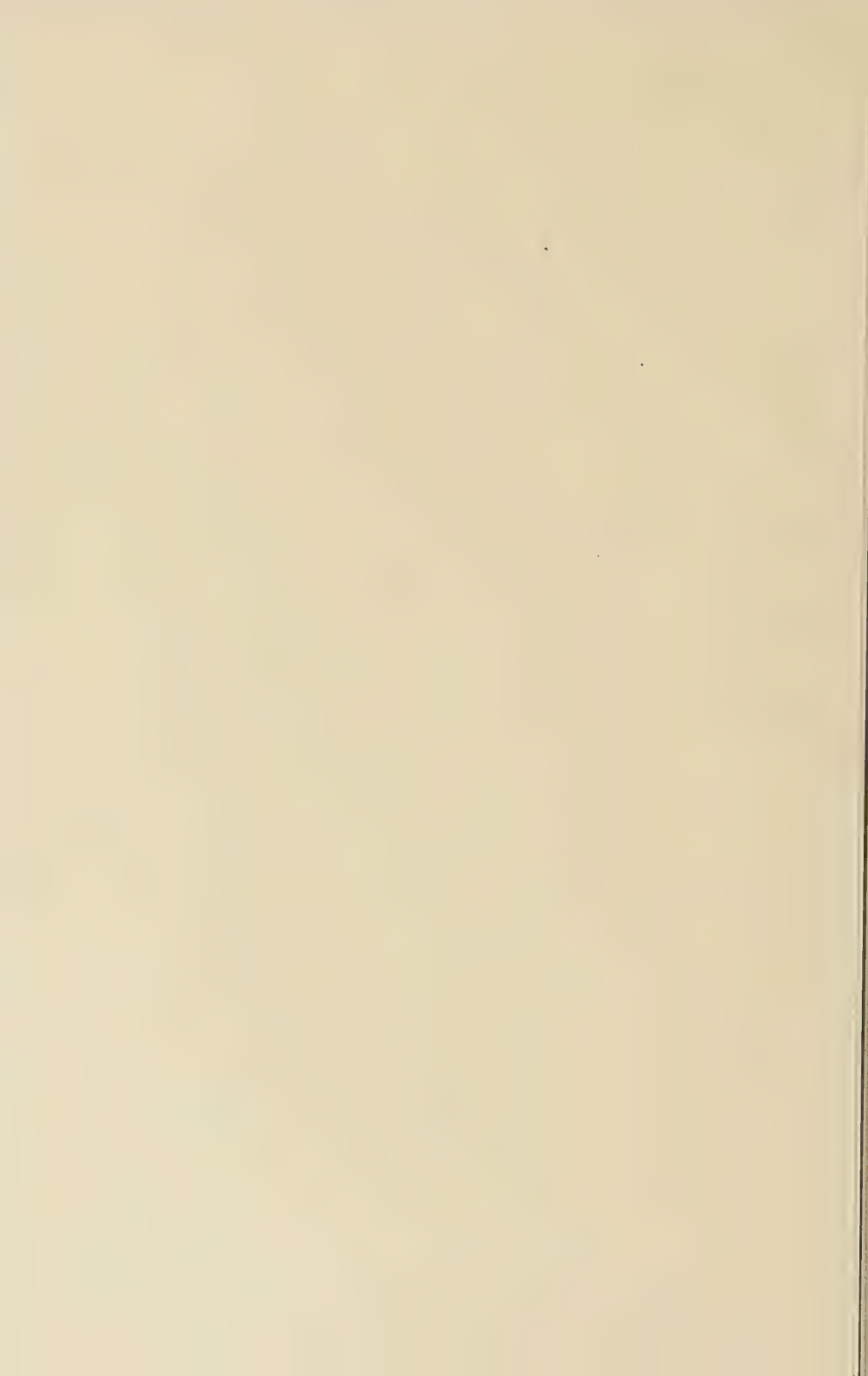
In November, 1794, good Baron Steuben died just as he was setting out from his bare little home in the wilderness for his yearly visit to New York — his one hour of contact with his old life. This left the Society of the Cincinnati without a president, and his devoted friend, his 'military son,' William Stephens Smith, was unanimously chosen president in his place. Colonel Smith held this office for two years, 1795 to 1797.

On March 25, 1795, he purchased the eastern portion of the van Zandt farm, a tract of twenty-three acres, lying between the East River and the Boston Post Road, extending north and
south,



THE OLD HOUSE IN EAST 61ST STREET, NEW YORK

On the surviving remnant of the Van Zandt farm purchased by Colonel Smith in 1795. It is now the property of the Colonial Dames of America



south, according to the wording of the old deed, 'to the division fence of Mr. Hugh Gaine and Peter Pa van Zandt on the north, and the farm of Abraham Beekman on the South'; in the language of to-day, between East Fifty-Eighth and Sixty-Second Streets.

By this deed, between 'Peter van Zandt, Gentleman, of the City of New York, and William S. Smith of the Said City, Gentleman,' Colonel Smith became the possessor of 'All that messuage [dwelling house] or Tenement, Outbuildings, barns, gardens, orchards, . . . together with all and singular Edifices, fences, enclosures, woods, water, ponds, pools, ways, passages, easements, profits, privileges, advantages, emoluments, heriditaments and appurtenances to said premises,' for the sum of five thousand pounds. And when we realize that this piece of land was not extensive, and that it was at that time situated in the country, it does not seem such a modest price.

The new house planned for this site by Colonel Smith was a reproduction of Mount Vernon. A later sales advertisement gives us an idea of its proportions. The house was 'seventy six feet long, with wide verandas.' The first floor had a ceiling thirteen feet high, and contained a large hall, a drawing room and three bed-rooms of palatial proportions. On the second floor were more of these ample bed-rooms and, 'on the roof a safe and commodious promenade, commanding a vast prospect.' . . . Colonel Smith called this house Mount Vernon in honor of his beloved commander; the bystanders called it, 'Smith's Folly' — a name afterwards, and for many years, attached to the more modest stone house still standing on a remnant of the Colonel's acres. Evidently the place proved more of an extravagance than he had anticipated. Mr. Adams would assure us that no man has a right to enjoyment of his folly, and the Colonel did not long revel in his. About the same time that he disposed of this East River property, he sold some of his Chenango acres, thus perhaps causing the mistaken inference of posterity that he was bankrupt. Quite the contrary. The Colonel was holding a lucrative Government position at this time, and he was frankly speculating in real estate, so that while he was selling one piece of property he was buying another. August first of that same year he purchased the tract of land comprising Washington

ington Square, which he afterwards sold to the city. Indeed many 'parcels' of land in Manhattan passed through the Colonel's hands in these years. It has not always been possible to locate the dwelling place of the William Smiths in their New York period. The letters are dated simply New York and furnish no clue. We do know, however, that it was their custom to spend their summers near the city, and that the van Zandt farm was purchased for that purpose. It is not improbable, therefore, that the summer of 1795 was spent in the old 'messuage or dwelling' mentioned in the deed of sale. It is entirely possible, too, that stones and bricks from one of the old van Zandt farm buildings — perhaps an especially stout 'Singular Edifice' — were mingled with the loads of gray stone the Colonel bought for the erection of the house in East Sixty-First Street, now the property of the Colonial Dames of America. Certainly some of the bricks on the north side are of great age. We see such appropriation of foundations, walls, building materials, in our own day, it would be surprising had it not been done in a day when building materials were so much more difficult to obtain. But it is not possible, at this late day, to say with certainty what building is indicated in contemporary references where no contemporary map exists.

Before the day of railroads, and for some time afterwards, summer homes were never very far from the city. From the East River the Colonel removed to East Chester, where he bought the property known as the Vincent Halsey house for his country place. He kept this East Chester property for over ten years. Indeed it was not disposed of until after he had removed permanently from New York. A portion of this house — said to be the part occupied by the President and Mrs. Adams during the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia — is still standing concealed in modern stucco.

In December, Abby had a letter from Pappa in which he most disarmingly shows us wherein he is superior to Mr. Clinton and Mr. Jefferson:

'PHILADELPHIA, December 17, 1795

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

'I am returned to my yearly servitude, and have begun to drudge for the winter. I should long since have been weary of
this

this laborious course, if, insignificant as my office appears, it had not been manifest upon several occasions, that some of the greatest questions upon the Constitution, as well as the great point of war or peace, had depended upon my decision. Had Mr. Clinton, or Mr. Jefferson, been in my place the winter before last, this country would now have been involved in all the evils of a foreign, if not a civil war. This language however must be in confidence; to many it would appear vain. It is not less true. . . .

'I sat down to write only to induce you to write to me; as I have no letter from Quincy. I fear your mamma may not be well. Don't conceal it from me, if she is. My love to Col. Smith and the children.'

In his next Mr. Adams's anxiety concerning his Abigail is relieved, and he indulges in a little ingenuous match-making which came to naught.

'PHILADELPHIA, *January 1, 1796*

'DEAR CHILD:

'I have several letters from your mother, who, I thank God, appears to be in good health. Mr. Josiah Quincy is now in this town, and is bound to Savanna in Georgia. This young man is a rare instance of hereditary eloquence and ingenuity in the fourth generation. He comes into life with every advantage of family, fortune and education. I yesterday, in the presence of half a dozen Senators, laughingly advised him to go to the President and Mrs. Washington, and ask their leave to make his addresses to Nelly Custis or her sister at Georgetown, in the course of his journey. The young gentleman blushed, and he may have left his heart in Boston; but I think him the first match in the United States. . . . I expected the pleasure of seeing Col. Smith at Christmas. My love to him, and to my grandchildren all. I am your

'Affectionate father,

'JOHN ADAMS.'

CHAPTER XXVIII

PAPPA BECOMES PRESIDENT AND MR. PICKERING POURS POISON IN HIS EAR

IN 1796, Mr. Washington announced that he 'did not choose to run,' and John Adams was elected President of the United States. Perhaps it was the effect of the presidential chair that Mr. Adams incredibly addresses his daughter as 'Mrs. Smith' in his first letter after the event.

'PHILADELPHIA, *January 29, 1796*

'MY DEAR MRS. SMITH:

'I have just received the enclosed from your mother, and, for the soul of me, I could not resist the temptation of reading it; so I have nothing left, but to beg your pardon for this ungentelemanly licentiousness. . . .

'I hear that Mr. Osgood has written a book upon the Prophecies and Revelations, and that he has lately been reading Homer, and has discovered that the Iliad and Odyssey were written by King Solomon, under inspiration: I should be very glad to get the book. I am determined to read all the wild things this country produces.

'Governor Adams's speech, too, I have just read. From the effect of old age upon such minds as Adams's and Styles's, I am led to deprecate a much longer continuance in public life. . . . May my farm and family only be witnesses of my dotages; may they forgive and veil them from public view. The worst of it is, a man is not conscious when they make their first approaches.'

These next words have a strangely familiar ring. 'The world, my dear child, I think with you, is running wild, and quitting the substance to seize on a shadow. It is endeavoring to shake itself loose from every divine and moral tie, every restraint of law and government, every bias of discipline and virtuous education. . . .

'There is a youth, I mean a young generation, coming up in America, which, I hope, will make good the ground of their predecessors.

decessors. You, my dear daughter, will be responsible for a great share in the duty and opportunity of educating a rising family, from whom much will be expected.' After which uncontrollable outbreak of advice, Mr. Adams relaxes to rejoice that his grandchildren are 'happily through the measles,' and to send his love to their father.

After her father's inauguration, Abigail writes apologizing for not having congratulated him more promptly upon this high honor. The letter seems to reflect some temporary discomfort in her conditions. Perhaps the joyous Colonel was away land-shopping for himself or Mr. Livingston or Lord Pulteney — that habit which was so deeply annoying to his father-in-law. The Colonel was quite a thermometer for Abby's mood. Her temperament, *grave*, as Madame Lafayette called it — needed the stimulus of his fire, his quicksilver, his unquenchable hopefulness.

'The season with us has been extremely severe, and my faculties have been, I believe, congealed by the cold. I have had scarcely any intercourse with my friends, and this must be my apology for having omitted to offer you my congratulations upon your election to the Presidency of the United States, a station in which none can more sincerely wish you happiness, peace, and tranquility, than your daughter; but,' she adds voicing an apprehension that her father finds a trifle tactless, 'I fear that the party, who have hitherto embarrassed the President by their cabals, and who have exerted themselves to divide the election, will continue to render it, as uncomfortable a situation as possible.'

If slightly *mal-à-propos* at this exhilarating moment, Abby's apprehensions proved to be only too well founded, as poor Pappa was shortly to discover. •

'You will suffer much inconvenience from the absence of my mother in the interior arrangement of your affairs,' his daughter also somewhat gloomily reminds him, for poor Mrs. Adams was ill and caring for other invalids at this important moment, and unable to be with her husband.

But Pappa replies with prompt assurances of his own potentialities for popularity: 'I hope your apprehensions that "the party who have embarrassed the President, and exerted themselves

selves to divide the election, will endeavour to render my situation as uncomfortable as possible," will be found to be without sufficient foundation; I have seen, on the contrary, a disposition to acquiesce, and hope it will increase. I am not at all alarmed; I know my countrymen very well.'

Mr. Adams gives an approving glance at himself in the mirror — 'If the way to do good to my country, were to render myself popular, I could easily do it. But extravagant popularity is not the road to public advantage.'

Although Abby has been married eleven years now, and is the mother of three children, Mr. Adams cannot seal a letter without a little enclosure of good advice. 'In your solitary hours, my dear daughter, you will have a delightful opportunity of attending to the education of your children, to give them an attachment to study, and to books. . . . You will find it more for your happiness, to spend your time with them in this manner, than to be engaged in fashionable amusements, and social entertainments, even with the best company. But,' Mr. Adams concludes hastily, 'I must restrain myself.'

Ever since 1791, the Colonel had, as we have seen, been more or less engaged in the prospecting and purchasing of lands, one of the paths by which men find or lose the road to fortune, and leave their descendants land-poor or pocket-rich, according to the jump of the cat of chance.

Mr. Adams was not of a speculative turn, and regarded all such transactions with distrust. Mr. Adams believed in living within your means. Colonel Smith believed in increasing them. The younger man saw the enormous and various possibilities that lay in the 'opening up' and development of a new country. His father-in-law viewed these operations with deep suspicion, which was constantly aggravated by the insinuations and untruths of the Colonel's enemy, Timothy Pickering, who, as Secretary of State, was always at the President's elbow.

Alexander Hamilton, who once told Washington that Timothy Pickering would bear watching, perhaps decided afterwards that Timothy had his uses. From Gilbert Stuart's portrait Mr. Pickering looks out at us with a covert sidelong glance from envious eyes. It is no surprise to discover those schemes of his against Colonel Smith and Elbridge Gerry. Mr. Adams's suspicions seem
absurd

absurd to-day, but he had been reared in the conservative long-settled coast section of Massachusetts, and had lived long in the Old World; the purchasing of vast tracts of wilderness in central New York and Canada seemed to him sheerest madness, just as the Colonel's coach and four, and his taste for the graceful luxuries of the period, seemed to the austere older man vanity and love of display.

True, the Colonel did not have a frugal background. After his father's removal from the earthly scene, the Smith ladies had a most simple manner of replenishing the larder. Miss Abigail Louisa Lynch, a great-great-niece to both Abby and the Colonel, tells of having seen in her childhood a certain trunk-shaped red casket which had served as the Smith family bank — but not a savings fund! Whenever money was needed the Smith ladies sold a piece of land on Long Island or New York, threw the gold pieces into the red trunk, and lived regally until it was gone — after which another piece of land went the way of its predecessors. The Colonel was hardly as improvident as this, despite the 'Folly,' but he had a well-defined impression that money was to be enjoyed, not hoarded.

Mr. Adams is quite generally described as a gentleman with a temper. In her delightful biography, 'Abigail Adams and Her Times,' Mrs. Richards tells us that when he wrote letters which his wife thought 'unwise,' she would secretly hold them back and give them to him a week later, suggesting that he might wish to change this or that. Evidently while his guardian angel was in Quincy the Colonel got some of these letters.

If there are passages in them that do not read pleasantly to-day, we must bear in mind not only the temper, but the fact that John Adams, who saw farther ahead than most of his associates, especially in matters of foreign policy, had a most harassing time throughout his presidential term, and that he had beside him, hampering him, a Secretary of State inherited from Washington, whose soul was eaten with jealousy of light-hearted Colonel Smith, and who worked to ruin him with an incredible persistency; and that while Mr. Adams was constantly having poison poured into his ear at Philadelphia, the blithe Colonel, having a good time on Brockholst Livingston's and Lord Pulteney's business in the North, did not seem to realize the
necessity

necessity for self-defense. The devotion with which John Adams ever sought to assist his daughter's husband is proof both of his unfailing sense of justice and his real valuation of the Colonel's gifts and character. Indeed, there is abundant testimony to his exonerations of the Colonel, and no evidence whatever of his having been estranged from him for several years, as has been recently stated by a writer who may have read a single letter, or extracts from a letter, or none.

In type the two men were as opposite as the poles. The soldier attracted the man of state, but he did not understand him. What seemed to the frugal New-Englander vanity and ostentation was in William Smith but a natural expression of himself. John Adams was a son of the New England Puritans. William Smith's father was a prosperous New York merchant, his family were members of New York society. His youth had been spent on the battle-field and in foreign courts. When he had money he spent it, but ostentatious never — a more natural creature never lived. Indeed he cared all too little for the shafts of envy or the retaliations of those whom he discovered to be failing in duty, but fearlessly exposed them that justice might be done. He was a man of swift intuitions who may have jumped to conclusions, as John Adams thought he did, but they were usually right. General Wilkinson was a case in point.

February 16, 1798, John Adams replies to a letter from the Colonel evidently criticizing Wilkinson (whom he must have known in Revolutionary days): 'You are too precipitate, in my opinion, in pronouncing that General Wilkinson has been guilty of high crimes,' and Mr. Adams proceeds to strike a little below the belt. 'There have not been wanting criticisms upon *your* conduct. . . . It is reported, not much to the advantage of your reputation or mine, that you have been to Detroit for Brockholst Livingston and company to speculate in the lands and claims of those who mean to remain British subjects.' Then, referring to Wilkinson, 'I can scarcely believe that you could countenance a report so utterly unfounded.'

But the Colonel was not judging from report, and did not thoughtlessly attack reputations. The facts are that General Wilkinson came very much into disrepute some years later and was completely self-exposed at the trial of Aaron Burr; whereas
Brockholst

Brockholst Livingston, Revolutionary officer, eminent jurist, who rose to be a Justice of the Supreme Court, was a quite unassailable person, whose land speculations, far from being discreditable, were nothing more or less than the thing that at a later period made the Astor fortune, and that is reckoned business acumen to-day.

When the Colonel finds time to answer Pappa-in-law next month, good Mr. Adams has to eat his words. There is a tone almost of apologetic mildness in this mastication, dated March 2, 1798: 'I have received your letter of Feb. 23rd, the contents of which are satisfactory to me. I did not say that I *believed* the report I heard. In truth I did not give credit to it, but hearing the rumour and knowing that others had heard it, I was determined to give you the opportunity of contradicting it if you could, and of enabling me to do the same. You have now put it in my power and I shall avail myself of it.'

Apparently Mr. Adams is not so sure now that General Wilkinson was being falsely accused, for he adds, 'General Wilkinson has been informed of the complaint . . . and instructed to modify, if possible, his proclamation.'

In May, Mr. Adams writes to him from Quincy. The Colonel is now skipping about the Northwest: 'I have received your letter of the 16th and the bundle of letters enclosed' (disclosures of improper treatment of the Indians, but Mr. Adams's pain does not seem to have been on their behalf). 'Mr. Shieflin' (an Indian agent) 'would have done better to have addressed his letters and papers to me than to you, who are not Secretary of War.' Yes, Mr. Adams, but Mr. Shieflin had talked directly with the Colonel and found him chatty and sympathetic. 'You are suspected' — suspected again, poor dear — 'of improper speculations in the neighborhood of Detroit, and in connection with characters whose friendship does you no honor. These Indian pretensions I suspect' (more suspicions) 'to have been excited by you and your associates.' The Red man did not have many advocates in those days, and John Adams was not the only one unable to understand indignation at the treatment accorded them. Yet who was better acquainted with their seamy side than the Colonel who had fought against them? 'If,' Mr. Adams concludes, a trifle snappishly, 'you desire the
command

command of Detroit, you must solicit it of the Secretary of War' (Mr. McHenry having just come in for the Colonel's criticism of his treatment of, Lo, the poor Indian, would of course be delighted to heap honors upon him) 'or of the commander-in-chief of the army, or Major General Hamilton.'

It was in Mr. Adams's administration that the French war cloud rose upon the horizon, and in April, 1798, Abby writes to her parents with anxiety. The Colonel has apparently concluded the Canadian negotiations by this time and is making a little visit at home. The boys are again with their grandmother:

'I have not so frequently written for a month past,' Mrs. Adams explains, 'because I have felt less anxious for you since the Colonel's return. You ask me, if we shall have war? I answer, that we already have war; the French have been at war with us for these many months: but your question is, I presume, will America declare war against France? I hope we shall have spirit and energy sufficient to arm, and defend ourselves; and if that obliges us to declare war, the sooner the better. . . . One of the great evils we suffer has arisen from the disunion in our Representatives, and the blind attachment which the people have imbibed towards France, even though the whole system of their revolution has become the tyranny and oppression of every kingdom, they have conquered, or fraternized as they term it. I enclose the despatch from our Envoys. The President thought the critical state of the country required him to submit the communications. The world will then see, that the unjust aspersions cast upon the President, that he wished for war, and that the instructions were not ample, are as groundless as many others which are industriously circulated to injure him.'

It was not long before troops were mobilized and put in training, and Washington summoned to command of the army.

Colonel Smith, hand on sword, writes to his President father-in-law what he would like to have in the way of a military appointment. Mr. Adams, of course, had influence, but limited by the Secretary of State who was the Colonel's enemy, Pickering, and the Senate, who had to endorse the nomination.

In his organization of the new army, Washington presented a
list

list of the names of men he desired for high positions of command. On this list Colonel Smith was down as Brigadier, or Adjutant General, which shows what Washington thought of his military abilities. But at the moment when Washington's list was placed before President Adams, July 17, 1798, Mr. Pickering was found placing Dayton's name over the Colonel's. This, however, was comparatively speaking, only a gesture. Mr. Pickering, knowing what the combined desires of Washington and Adams might do for Colonel Smith, permitted his jealous hatred to lead him into an appalling breach of honor. Taking advantage of his confidential knowledge, as Secretary of State, of the honor about to be conferred upon Colonel Smith, he hurried from the executive mansion to the Senate to work up feeling against him, dishonoring him with calumnies that were easily enough disproved when the Colonel, too late, had a chance to defend himself. Result, July 19, 1798, the Senate confirmed all nominations *except* Colonel Smith's, which they rejected on Pickering's misrepresentations, 'without the President's knowledge, and sustained by no evidence,' as Charles Francis Adams puts it. July 18th, next day, the busy Mr. Pickering wrote a confidential letter to Alexander Hamilton, on the subject. Hamilton had military ambitions, Colonel Smith had military talents. Hamilton's gifts were administrative. Undoubtedly Pickering worked upon his competitiveness, his fear of rivalry. John Adams, who did not admire the 'Bairn of Nevis,' as he called him, believed Hamilton to be the instigator, Pickering the tool. 'Washington could not get ministers such as he wanted to serve with Hamilton,' he wrote long afterwards. 'He was compelled to take such as he did not like, particularly Pickering and McHenry. This I knew from his own Mouth. . . . It was through General Knox's influence that Pickering was made Secretary of State. Washington objected.'

Whether originator or tool Timothy Pickering's persecution of Colonel Smith was relentless and ruinous, officially without precedent.

Charles Francis Adams tells us that, 'It is believed that no similar instance of interference with the action of a President by a cabinet officer has ever occurred under the present form of government.'

Pickering's

Pickering's jealousy of Colonel Smith continued to his injury until 1800, when the long-suffering President removed him from office,¹ in spite of his ignominious protest that he stood in pressing need of its emoluments. No false pride about Mr. Pickering.

In December of that year the harried Mr. Adams, who wrote peevish letters to the Colonel, but never ceased to work in his interest, expressed his distress to his wife. 'If Smith has forfeited his honor I wish some kind friend would give me facts and proofs. In such a case I would not nominate him to be a lieutenant. But no such fact or proof has been presented to me.' It could not very well have been, since Mr. Pickering's tales against him were impurest fiction.

December 1, 1798, John Adams writes to his son-in-law in perplexity. It has been proposed to offer him a lieutenant-colonelcy, for the higher appointments are now filled. Mr. Adams, feeling this position to be beneath the Colonel's deserts and dignity, was reluctant to confirm it. 'Before you receive this you will probably receive a letter from the Secretary of War informing you that the general officers have proposed either you or Mr. Hammond to be a Lieutenant Colonel commandant. The event has embarrassed me. I know not whether the Senate will not again negative the nomination, if I make it, or whether you will accept the appointment should they advise it.'

Mr. Adams need not have been embarrassed. The Colonel, generous soul, without envy or emulation, seeing always only the larger issues, was ready and glad to serve his country in any capacity that offered.

'I will be plain with you,' Mr. Adams continues — and proceeds to be very plain indeed, as New England can be when it sets out to speak its mind. 'Your pride and ostentation' (that coach and four still rankled) 'which I have seen with inexpressible grief for many years, have excited among your neighbors so much envy and resentment that if they have to allege against you any instance of dishonorable conduct, as it is pretended they have, you may depend upon it, it will never be forgiven or forgotten.'

But, as Mr. Adams should have known, nothing so excites
the

¹ 'I said at the time to a few confidential friends that I signed my own dismissal when I signed his,' John Adams wrote to William Cunningham concerning Pickering.

the unreasoning fury of the envious as the spiritual invulnerability of their victim. 'If I were to nominate you to anything more than a regiment — according to reports and the spirit that prevails — I have no doubt you would be negatived by the Senate. If I nominate you to a regiment, I still fear it will not pass.'

The next sentences display a touch of that pettiness that sometimes overtook this great but surely tried man, who did not at this time realize the source of all those calumnies: 'It is a great misfortune to the public that the office I hold should be disgraced by a nomination of my son-in-law which the Senate of the United States think themselves obliged to negative. If the disgrace should be repeated it will be a serious thing to the public as well as to me, to you and to your children.'

To-day we should not consider the public involved, nor even, very profoundly, Mr. Adams and his wounded dignity. The real sufferers were Abby and the innocent Colonel — who was losing the fruits of his patriotic devotion through the envy and hatred of a powerful and unscrupulous inside enemy, working against him in the dark.

'I pray you write me without loss of time,' Mr. Adams concludes, 'whether you wish me to make the nomination, and whether you will accept it if made and consented to.'

Perhaps this letter aroused the Colonel to the necessity for making a full statement of the facts that fully cleared him from Pickering's malicious insinuations; perhaps it was the first time he had achieved an actual hearing. In any case he furnished his proof, and while Pickering was babbling about, that the general officers had again declined to nominate him, Colonel Smith was already appointed. Mr. Pickering had robbed a good man of his laurels, but he was not able to prevent him from giving his best to his country. To quote again from that dispassionate commentator, Charles Francis Adams:

'Far from respecting the confidential nature of his post, he [Pickering] had never hesitated to exert his influence secretly to counteract the President's wishes, as when having confidential knowledge of the President's intention, he hastened to the Senate, privately to rouse in advance the opposition necessary to defeat Colonel Smith.'

But

But the autumn of 1799 found Colonel Smith in camp drilling troops, inspiring one and all with his flame-like enthusiasm. Evil destiny might attack, but it could not destroy him, for the inner sources of the joy of life were within that generous heart, an inexhaustible fountain.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE COLONEL PREPARES AN ELEGANT HUT

COLONEL SMITH'S letters from camp to his wife are a vivid portrait of himself as a commander of men and a practical organizer. Resourceful in the daily problems of an unequipped camp, permitting himself even in the cold of a bitter winter no special privileges not shared by his men, his patriotic enthusiasm survives all setbacks. With, it seems, no regrets for that position of high command of which Timothy Pickering deprived him, he throws himself into his task, heart and soul on fire with his purpose. And yet not only the soldier: his letters show him, after fourteen years of marriage, still the devoted lover, the affectionate father.

'UNION CAMP, *Oct. 28th, 1799*

'MY DEAR WIFE:

'I have received your letter of the 24th, this day, the after part of which has been taken up in the reception of the 13th regiment into our camp. The scene was brilliant, and attended by the whole of the inhabitants of the adjacent country. It is now over; and after giving a welcome in my tent to the officers and respectable inhabitants, it being 10 o'clock at night, I compose myself to communicate with you.

'With respect to the accommodation I have provided, very few who know me, would doubt of their being ample, and the best the country affords, and few countries can furnish more comfortable. . . .

'There are a great many cross-grained things in the affairs of this life, my dear, which must be borne up against with firmness. With the aid of a little philosophy, we may rise superior to most of the common occurrences of life; at least, not permit them to interfere with that negative, if not positive happiness, which depends greatly upon ourselves.

'Never tell me my dear baby is sick; if you were to write me she was dead, I could bow with reverence to the final decisions of a wise and over-ruling Providence; but when I think she is in
pain,

pain, and that my assiduities as a parent might relieve her from a pang, I am tortured that I cannot fly to give her a momentary comfort in the lap of affection and parental tenderness. For Heaven's sake take care of her, and let me know speedily she is better. Give my affectionate love to my dear mother and yours, my sisters and my lovely babe. We are still in tents, and from the arrangements made, are likely to be so for some time to come. The troops bear the cold well, and seem to be bouyed above the frost; for they say, look at the Colonel, he never goes to a fire, or seeks comfort in a house, and why should we complain? In short, they are ready to undergo "the toils of war, and bear the hardships that their leader bears," who cannot, however hard the struggle may be between duty and love, leave them to freeze or burn, without him.

'Adieu, my dear.

'W. S. SMITH.'

We get an impression that the Colonel had more of the paternal quality than Abigail of the maternal. His letters are full of allusions to his children, whereas we find little mention of them in hers. To the end she kept his letters. Of hers to him William seems only to have preserved those written before marriage. Perhaps when he had the reality, the reflection was less important. Perhaps it was only the difference between a man and a woman. Or perhaps while he lived he did keep them. Caroline, of course, did not foresee the intensely personal interest of to-day, and would have been horrified had any one suggested such indecent exposure of the intimate emotions. In the mid-nineteenth century one was interested in the landscape, the events and characters of history, not in the human document.

We catch a glimpse of how and why the Colonel was able to handle men in this amusing picture of cold weather in camp.

'UNION CAMP, Nov. 24th, 1799

'I had the pleasure, my dear, of receiving your favor of the 20th yesterday. . . . You say you often think of me, enduring, as I must, many hardships and inconveniences; they are, however, hardships and inconveniences which scarce deserve regard, relating

lating only to the person; the pains which really incommode, are in the mind, occasioned by delays in the supply of the necessary materials. I have been so annoyed by drones, that I have assumed the command of everything; contractors, burners of brick, vendors of boards, and all the horses and wagons in the country, and have given a new spring and turn to all our gloomy prospects. My troops will all be covered; their houses are built, and most of their chimneys rise above the roof, so that if the storms *do* come severely, they can go to cover. The officers are now busied about theirs, and many are in considerable forwardness. For my own, I laid the first beam yesterday at noon; if I am able to strike my tent the second week in December, I shall be content; but I will not go into a house before the troops are all comfortably cantoned. Do not be uneasy, I shall not suffer. I am above what the world calls suffering; I am a stranger to that state of mind which accompanies or occasions sufferings in others. No officer or soldier, or even any of the inhabitants, dare say it's cold in camp. A laughable circumstance occurred the other morning, just after the beating of the *reveille* drum, when the surface of the earth was covered with a strong frost. I was walking to the huts, was overtaken by a countryman who had brought poultry to market, who communicated his errand, and said, rubbing his hands, and teeth chattering, "'tis a plaguy sharp morning, Colonel; 'tis terribly cold." "Are *you* cold, my friend? Here, sergeant of the guard, take this friend of mine, put him by the guard fire, put a sentinel over him, burn him, but don't baste him, until he is about half roasted; for no man must be cold in this camp. And every man hereafter, who imagines himself so, must be roasted; for it is a fine, pleasant morning, and the weather will continue fine until our huts are built." The countryman had not long been by the fire, before he began to beg. I kept near; at length he called to me, "For goodness sake, Colonel, let me go; they'll roast me! Forgive me this time, and if I'm half froze to death, I'll never say it's cold, when I am in camp again." I let him off, in a perspiration. It is now fine fun for the soldiers; if any of them happen to say it's cold, his comrades take him, neck and heels, and carry him to the fire, and amuse themselves much with this trifle. Let it be ever so sharp, the soldiers say, "It is a beautiful, fine day, huzza!"

The

The Colonel, with the authority of the born organizer, goes ahead and does it first and tells Alexander Hamilton afterwards: 'After assuming the direction of everything, I wrote to General Hamilton what I had done, and the different turn our affairs had taken.' And Mr. Hamilton praised the Colonel for doing it. 'The lateness of the season, and the absolute necessity of putting the men under cover, justify the extraordinary measures which you have taken.' On the 15th Hamilton wrote to him again: 'I am happy to find you are in a fair way of surmounting all your difficulties. The spirit of the troops, the harmony among the officers, and the good understanding between the soldiers and citizens, give me real pleasure, and do honor to the commanding officer.'

The Colonel was unswervingly serious in his work. 'Had I done as Col. Moore, I might have wintered in Amboy; for when I landed here, there was no timber procured, nor tools provided to work with; but I persevered, not wishing to spoil my soldiers by quartering them in a town. We are now doing well, and I would not change with any who have barracks in a city.'

But Mr. Pickering cannot leave the Colonel alone. He cannot understand why his poisonous arrows struck, yet failed to pierce, that bright armor. Now he is whispering into the not unwilling ear of Mr. McHenry. But the Colonel seems rather amused than otherwise at that gentleman's concern with the dimensions of his hut: 'Is it not rather singular that the Secretary of War should inquire the form and dimensions of *my* hut? He sent me, through his agent, all the plans and dimensions minutely arranged. Ask him what those dimensions were, and whether any alterations have been made in his original project? You might with more propriety ask him what allowance he had made for your accommodation, than he to put the question he did. A minister of war should know everything, or at least not appear to be ignorant of anything in his department. You must not be any way apprehensive of the democrats producing any disorder in my camp. I shall soon, if they show their cloven foot within the sphere of my command, put them in checkmate with my knights and castles, supported by my queen and bishops. I find no difficulty in introducing and supporting discipline. The brigade will be ready to meet a legion of devils on horseback,

whenever

whenever the order is given, and are now disposed to do everything I choose to order, or even look as if I wish to have done. The real dignity of military command shall never be tarnished in my hands. I will preserve it pure and unblemished for my country's glory, which must and will shine resplendent in arms, should circumstances offer.'

The Colonel agrees with John Quincy about Abby's perfections, but he is not sure that she is to be trusted with a time-piece: 'I am glad my watch is repaired; take care of her. I suspect you of a little inattention to these delicate machines. Never has a watch gone better than yours since I have had her. After the first 24 hours, she partook of the regularity of her master, and has discovered no disposition to deviate. Would it not be best to let mine remain unopened until I see you? Keep her going and warm, and she'll be true.' (Here Caroline has made a cut.) 'Give my love to my dear baby and kiss her for me. As soon as my hut is fit to receive you, I will welcome you to it. Can the chariot be spared to convey you here? or shall I send for you?'

The black horse, formerly the Colonel's, was not subject to military régime in the presidential stables. He is not quite himself, it seems, and the Colonel has been asked to prescribe.

'With respect to the black horse, they are about killing him, as they do others, with kindness; the horses, when not used by the family, should be regularly and gently exercised every day; they should at least be walked to the Schuylkill, or Kensington; and the shore at the latter place admitting of horses being rode into the water, it ought to be practiced often; it cools their feet, which, without exercise and washing, will invariably get heated with grain. They should not be allowed to use corn in their feed; eight quarts of oats and four of good bran, mixed, allowing three messes a day for each horse, is abundantly sufficient for the President's horse; more, is waste and injurious. Previous to a journey they should have oats entirely for six days; this method of feed will give them a clean coat, cool their chests, and recover their feet. On a journey, the servants should be prohibited from feeding in the morning. When the journey of the day is finished, the horses perfectly cool, cleaned, and watered, you cannot put too much before them; they will eat half a bushel, and clean the
trough;

trough; then through the day they want no more, unless you stop two hours at dinner; then if cool, four quarts may be given to the carriage horses, but only two to the saddle horses: the grain is more apt to affect the feet of a saddle than a carriage horse. I am sorry for the black; he never with me, was either sick, lame, or lazy.

‘You asked it, or I should not trouble you with information about horses’ legs.

‘God bless you.’

‘W. S.’

CHAPTER XXX

THE SUN HAS SET BUT NIGHT DOES NOT FOLLOW

WHEN the news of the death of Washington, his friend, his commander, reached the Colonel, his first thought was tribute.

‘UNION BRIGADE, *Dec. 22, 1799*

‘MY DEAR:

‘I have the pleasure to inform you that I struck my marquee on the 19th, and took shelter in my hut, which is yet without doors to it, but much more comfortable than the tent. The last night I slept in the tent; a bottle of wine, standing on the table, froze through, but still I was not uncomfortable. It will be sometime before I can have the pleasure to announce to you that the hut is sufficiently comfortable for you and my baby. The holidays are coming on, and I find the workmen disposed to visit their homes at the gay season. The pleasures of that season will, however, be checked by the death of General Washington, which I see is made known in the Philadelphia paper of the 18th.

‘You will have a great opportunity now to notice the intrigues which this melancholy circumstance will give rise to. Now the President will be perplexed, and tormented; now the full force of the party will be brought forward; and now, America shakes to her centre with convulsive throbs, wishing, yet trembling still to hear that name declared, who is to fill the important vacant post.

‘I must acknowledge, however, for myself I fear that the President will not have it in his power to carry into effect the pure, unbiassed dictates of his firm and virtuous soul. He will now find himself, like the Roman Cato, sustaining a painful preeminence, distinguished amongst his countrymen by superior toils and heavier weight of cares. Write me very particularly.

‘My love to my dear little girl. God bless you.’

The next day he tells of his preparations to do honor to Washington, and of his plans for a monument to be erected on that spot.

‘My

'UNION BRIGADE, *December 23, 1799*

'MY DEAR:

'I received yours of the 19th this afternoon, and yesterday received orders from General Hamilton to prepare for the funeral rites of our departed General on Thursday next. I have put everything in the necessary train of execution, preparative to the reception of his final orders. . . . Last night I determined to erect a monument to his memory, and penned the enclosed. This morning, consulted the field officers of the brigade, who cheerfully consented to share the expense. It will be erected on the centre in front of the cantonment, of white marble, engraved with black letters, on a mound to be raised for the fixture of the pedestal of the monument. Its rear will be conical, adorned with military trophies in black lines; its front will bear the inscription enclosed. I wish the President could spare time to overlook it, and make such alteration as may strike him as necessary.'

On the anniversary of the night twenty-three years before, when he had crossed the Delaware with General Washington, the Colonel's brigade does the last earthly honor to the great commander,

'UNION BRIGADE, NEW JERSEY
December 27th, 1799

'We attended yesterday the funeral honors, paid to the *great*, the illustrious General, George Washington, at the military station of the Union Brigade, consisting of the 11th, 12th, and 13th regiments of infantry, under the command of William S. Smith, Lieutenant Colonel of the 12th.

'The solemnities of the day were introduced at the *reveille* drum, by the discharge of sixteen rounds from the brigade artillery, which continued the fire of single guns every half hour, until the sun had gained the zenith, when a bier covered with a pall, preceded by five of the reverend clergy of the adjacent congregations, carried by four non-commissioned officers, supported by Major General Dayton, Major General Frederick Freelinghuysen, Brigadier General John Noble Cummings, Brigadier General Jonathan Ford Morris, Brigadier General John Doughty, Brigadier General John Herd, Brigadier General Anthony Walton White, and Colonel John Neilson, presented
itself,

itself, from a marquee, in front of the centre of the cantonment. Upon the appearance of the bier, it was received by the line in full parade with presented arms, and the line of officers saluted this emblem of the corpse of the departed hero — their beloved General and Chief Commander.'

The Colonel gives a most detailed account of the military maneuvers he had planned with such care. We quote a few paragraphs:

'No noise was heard, except the minute-guns of the artillery and the solemn tread of the slowly moving battalions keeping perfect time with the measures of a solemn dirge, performed on muffled drums, with the accompaniment of fifes, by the musicians of the brigade, marching in the centre of the open column. The column preceded the bier, which was attended by four or five thousand mourning citizens.'

The brigade halted 'by drum signal (for this brigade appears not to require any words of command) and formed a complete and beautiful solemn avenue for the bier to proceed through. The line thus formed rested on reversed arms, the music played a solemn air, after which, orders issued by the President were read, and the Reverend Mr. Austin delivered a very pathetic address to a numerous and attentive audience. The urn was now uncovered and deposited in the monument with solemn music. The monument was closed, the music ceased, and animated nature seemed disposed to pause one melancholy period . . . the mournful silence was interrupted by the signal drum calling on the battalions to shoulder, which being done, the whole line fired three volleys by signal tap of the drum. The following is the inscription for the marble monument to be erected on this sacred spot:

Sacred to the Memory
of the

ILLUSTRIOUS GEORGE WASHINGTON

General of the Armies of the United States of America,
Who Paid the Great Debt of Nature,
The 14th of December, 1799, on Mount Vernon,
Aged 68 Years.

"Sol occubuit, nox nulla sequitur."

To

To commemorate his virtues, to hand down to posterity the great, the dignified character of their exalted Chief, the Commandant and Officers of the Union Brigade, with solemn minds, with mourning souls, and hearts deeply impressed by the remembrance of his virtues, erect this MONUMENT at high noon, a point of time emblematic of the full meridian of his exalted glory, this 26th of December, 1799, in the 24th year of the Independence of their country.'

'The troops were then dismissed, having received the thanks of the commanding officer' (thus modestly does our Colonel refer to himself), 'who told them that the precision with which they performed the different evolutions of the funeral ceremonies did honor to them as soldiers. That they collectively had lost, in General George Washington, a father and a friend; . . . that no people could, with more propriety, have paid the tribute due on the occasion than the inhabitants of New Jersey; for on this day, the 26th day of December, 1776, the hero whose loss they now deplored, saved this State by his gallant and successful attack on the Hessian troops at Trenton; and finally forced the enemy to abandon the invaded shore.'

'Thus ended the only sad tribute which was in the power of the Union Brigade to pay to the memory of this greatest ornament of human nature; and, "take him all in all, they ne'er shall look upon his like again."'

But a few days later we find the Colonel cheerful over the selection of Aaron Ogden, one of his officers, to assist in the formation of army regulations.

'UNION BRIGADE, *January 10, 1800*

'MY DEAR:

'I have not had the pleasure of a line from you since the 28th of December, which I attribute, however, to the difficulties in crossing the Delaware. I have seen General Lee's oration as it is called. It is a plain story, plainly told, for a funeral narrative; and will hereafter be read with that apathy which seems to have overshadowed the author. The great Adjutant General cries out for help, and I have sent it, in consequence of a letter from General Hamilton of the 7th inst., which says:

"Sir:

“Sir: I have concluded that Colonel Ogden, under your orders, shall be detached this winter from the Brigade for the purpose of assisting the Adjutant General in forming regulations for the Army. I request, therefore, that you will give him permission to be absent. With true consideration, I am, sir,

“Your most obedient,

“Humble servant,

(Signed) “A. HAMILTON.”

‘This is a good nut; I crack it with pleasure.’

In his next he gayly refutes more Pickeringese:

‘BRUNSWICK, *January 14th, 1800*

‘I am, my dear, here at General White’s in company with Mrs. and Judge Cushing, Mrs., Miss, and Judge Paterson, &c. I thank you for your letter. Be it known, we are not building a dancing room; be it known I have not built an elegant hut. I should not have gratified my feelings relative to you had I not made it comfortable. The carpenters leave it the day after tomorrow. The sooner of course you pay it a visit, the more agreeable to its builder. You must not permit Mr. Dayton’s description to lead you astray’ (that Mr. Dayton favored by Timothy Pickering). ‘My hut is water tight; seven feet and one inch high, with two rooms and a kitchen. Rain cannot incommode those who are in it, and cold will not affect you. When you have arranged to move towards me, let me know; I will, of course, meet you at Brunswick, Kingston, Princeton, or Trenton, in proportion to the time I receive your letter pointing out the moment of your departure. I will, on the receipt of it, go to Brunswick; if you are not there, I will proceed on the road until we meet.’

‘I am my dear,

‘Yours affectionately,

‘W. S. SMITH.’

Abby and Caroline are still guests in the Presidential Mansion in Philadelphia, and that congenital grandparent is reluctant to relinquish his hold upon Caroline.

‘My

‘UNION BRIGADE, February 26th, 1800

‘MY DEAR:

‘I have received your letter, by the Paymaster, of the 12th. I see your embarrassment, *the roads are bad, the season is inclement, the Delaware is almost impassable; your mamma cannot bear to part with you, and the President does not know how to let Caroline go.* These are truths which nobody can deny. I will continue to be honest and say, you must not encounter the hazards of the first, nor do violence to affection in the last, though I should be happy to have you here. I candidly think, for yourself, you are better there for the present. I am totally absorbed in military business and instruction; I have not been out of the cantonment for sixteen days. I have got handsomely through the duties of the 22d. We are all in harmony and good humor, our camp is a military paradise; if I look, they are solicitous to understand it; if I speak, they jump to execute; in short, they are all obedience, and I am more placid and elegantly serene than ever you saw me; I think sometimes, if you could but remark me through the day, you would be half in love with me by tea time. You know the point of time, when that generally takes place; for myself, I never take tea in the afternoon. . . .

‘We had a great collection of folk on Saturday. The Brigade moved to a charm; a prayer, composed for the occasion, was handsomely addressed; a military oration, elegantly delivered; and three verses chanted, accompanied with martial music. There is no other’ exclaims our soldier, ‘worth hearing. Not wishing to dismiss the throng too solemnly impressed, I gave order, that the duties of the day should close with a unison of sentiment and voice, resounding through our camp and echoing from the neighboring mountains. Attention, fellow-soldiers: To the memory of George Washington, called from labor to refreshment by the Grand Master of the Universe — three cheers and a six-pounder. To the United States and the Federal Constitution — three cheers and a six-pounder. To John Adams, President of the United States, may every blessing attend his exertions in our country’s cause — three cheers and a six-pounder. To the Empire, rising in this Western World, Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men — three cheers and a six-pounder.

Drums,

Drums, signals, columns moving, reducing the hollow square, and opening in full parade, we, with military dignity, left the stage and gaping multitude, attentive to the precision of the movement and the enchanting music of the President's march. You laugh, I know, at my military enthusiasm; laugh on. I really feel sometimes, as if I could "play at bowls with the sun and moon, and frighten the world with eclipses." Good night, lest I frighten you.'

There we have our Colonel! Do you wonder that poor Royall Tyler was forgotten?

When the ice in the Delaware has succumbed to the spring sunshine, we find Abby and little Caroline in camp with the Colonel inhabiting the elegant hut aforementioned. Letters arrived in all sorts of ways in those days. This one from Mrs. Adams, about to visit them on her way from Philadelphia to Quincy, was delivered by a somehow related Mrs. Smith, who descended from the stage-coach for the purpose, and was doubtless exhilarated by her brief glimpse of the Colonel's camp.

Mrs. Adams's letter is all of war and politics: 'Since I wrote you last, the Secretary of War has resigned, and General Marshal is nominated in his place. Such times are approaching for our country, as require the skill, knowledge, and industry of all. . . . The federal phalanx ought to unite, and form like Milton's angels, an impenetrable shield, around their government.' Mrs. Adams apologizes for pacifistic leanings. 'As it respects myself though I can expect but a few years more of existence, I should like to pass those without intestine broils and commotions. My sentiments are for you alone: you know how the world would judge them, selfish and interested; . . . Congress expects to rise to-morrow night; they will hurry through if they can. I hope to leave here on Friday next. I have a very good coachman; but wanting another, I meet with some difficulty; for the President must have a man well calculated to manage four horses in hand.' (So Mr. Adams has consented — reluctantly, of course — to the coach and four!) 'He will be more exposed than I shall, as he is almost persuaded to make a short excursion to Washington, before he returns to the eastward. I set out with no gentleman in my escort, and must leave Richard, too, for the President. I shall feel a little queer at first, but must try it.

it. I will write you, when I shall be at Brunswick; and request the Col. to send me an aid as far as there, to conduct me to you.'

When Abby received this from the hands of Mrs. Smith, she sent back prompt assurance of escort. 'As soon as I receive your letter, Colonel Smith and myself will meet you, and escort you here, where I hope you will spend Sunday. We can give you as comfortable accommodations as any you will find on the road.' We know that Mrs. Adams enjoyed that visit.

That month the Colonel, with his eye upon a military future, indicated to Pappa-in-law that he would like to have two regiments of artillery in his stocking. But Mr. McHenry was not disposed to play Santa Claus. His reason given, that able as Colonel Smith had proved himself to be in command of infantry, he did not feel sure of his ability to command artillery. General Washington was sure — but General Washington was dead, and Colonel Smith had not approved of Mr. McHenry's treatment of the Indians, so the Colonel did not get his regiments.

Pappa-in-law did his best and wrote a letter to Alexander Hamilton, now Commander-in-Chief of the army, concluding: 'Colonel Smith served through the war with the high applause of his superiors. He has served abroad in the diplomatic corps, at home as marshall and supervisor, and now as commander of a brigade. These are services of his own, not mine. His claims are his own. I see no reason or justice in excluding him from service, while his comrades are all ambassadors or generals, merely because he married my daughter.' A bold and humorous thrust, but Mr. Hamilton was not to be goaded.

Soon afterwards Mr. Adams made a treaty of peace with Mr. Bonaparte, and not long after that came the break-up of the Colonel's camp. Abby's letter to her mother after receiving this news (May 17, 1800) gives a pathetic picture of the situation of the men — so eager and ready to serve — left positionless at the disbanding of the army. The Colonel, his brother officers asserted, 'did his work too well.'

'The jacobins have now reason to exult at out maneuvering the federalists, as it appears they do upon every occasion. The federalists deserve everything that will happen to them for their apathy. The next thing I expect to hear is that they will sit quietly in their chimney corners, and permit themselves
to

to be robbed and murdered, without energy enough to make resistance. They will say, I suppose, "La, who would have thought it!"

'Our encampment exhibits a scene of melancholy countenances; some say, alas, my occupation is gone. Very many will not know how to dispose of themselves; some say, what a pity that such troops, who are just getting a knowledge of their profession should be dismissed. If they had given each man and officer, who would have engaged to settle upon it, a certain portion of land, they would have given some scope to their talents and industry. But to return such a number of men into society without employment is not a wise measure as respects the community; several young men, who had calculated upon making it their profession, are greatly mortified and disappointed, who for want of property or friends, or perhaps other talents, will now be destitute of any means of support. Others who never would have made good soldiers, are not to be regretted, however easy a life it may be thought. Col. Smith has had trouble enough with them to bring them to the state they are now in, and I will venture to say, that no officers in the service have exerted themselves more, and that there are no troops that will make a better figure in this country. Some of the officers say it is the Colonel's fault; if he had permitted them to be a set of undisciplined rag-a-muffins, that the Jacobins would not have been afraid of them; but they heard so much of their discipline, that they were afraid to leave them embodied.'

After the break-up of camp, prosaically ensconced in the office of the Surveyor of Customs, the Colonel wrote a long letter to that Colonel Ogden who had been permitted to draw up army regulations for Alexander Hamilton. Aaron Ogden and William Smith had been comrades since their Princeton days. They had fought together in Sullivan's raids and under Lafayette at the siege of Yorktown. The Colonel's 'lesson,' the aftermath of many a game in camp, shows why skilled military tacticians are chessplayers.

'Do you never write unless you are paid for it,' the Colonel begins with his banter. 'You will not come to this city, I cannot come to your town. . . . Solicitous of your improvement, and anxious that whatever you attempt you should do well, I propose

pose to hold a talk on the game of chess. And if you will be a good boy and mind what Master says, you will in a short time beat him who has, for a long time, kept *you* for his own beating.' Then follows the intricate pattern of play and counterplay, yet so dramatically set forth that, when we have finished reading that conflict of bishops, knights and queens, we feel as if we had been watching a battle.

CHAPTER XXXI

MR. ADAMS SAYS HAIL AND FAREWELL TO WASHINGTON

BRAVE Mrs. Adams, despite 'bodily infirmities,' was again destined to break ground in a new field. Nightmarish conditions awaited her in Washington which was made the Capital toward the end of Mr. Adams's administration. 'The woods are all you see from Baltimore until you reach the city which is so only in name,' she writes to her daughter. Then goes on to describe the house, which is upon a grand scale requiring about thirty servants. 'But it is unfinished' — very much so! — 'Bells wanting, fires wanting, not a single apartment finished' — and ladies from Georgetown enthusiastically coming at once to visit them! 'But you must keep this to yourself,' she concludes, 'and when asked how I like it say that I write you the situation is beautiful, which is true.'

The half-built audience room is used as a drying room in which to hang up the clothes. The great staircase is not finished, but 'six chambers are made comfortable,' and of course one is occupied by Mr. Adams.

Late in November she writes again to her daughter: '... The ladies are impatient for a drawing-room. I have no looking glasses but dwarfs for this house, nor a twentieth part of lamps enough to light it. ... Many things were stolen or broken by removal ... my tea china is more than half missing.'

John Adams's presidency was not smooth sailing. He had many vexatious problems to cope with and the tide of political events seemed to be running against him. He was not in sympathy with the French revolutionists and he insisted upon the establishment of a defensive navy. Time has justified his policies, but they were not popular in his day. In the election of 1800 he had the mortification of seeing the Nation's preference given to Thomas Jefferson, who had been Vice-President under him. That — or rather the situation that preceded it — was the beginning of the long breach between them. Mrs. Adams blames South Carolina:

'South Carolina,' she wrote to her son Thomas, 'has behaved

as

as your father always said she would. The consequence to us personally is that we retire to private life. For myself I have few regrets. At my age, with my bodily infirmities I shall be happier at Quincy. . . . If I did not rise with dignity I can at least fall with ease, which is the more difficult task. I leave to time the unfolding of the drama. I leave it to posterity to reflect upon the past, and I leave them *characters* to contemplate.'

Saddest of all, that December of 1800 brought deep grief in the death of their son Charles — 'the most a gentleman of them all.' Poor, tender-hearted Mr. Adams seems to have reproached himself as the cause, in having taken little Charles to Europe, the beginning of his delicate health.

One of John Adams's first letters after his son's death was to Jefferson, by whom he had been superseded and from whom he was now estranged. Jefferson had received some papers recording the young man's death, which he had returned to Mr. Adams unread: 'Had you opened them you would have found only papers informing you of the death of a son who was one of the delights of my eye and the darling of my heart, cut off in the flower of his days by causes which have been the greatest grief of my heart and deepest affliction of my life. I sincerely wish you may never experience anything in any degree resembling it.'

One of Mr. Adams's last appointments was to make his son-in-law Surveyor of Customs.

In January, 1801, the first New Year's reception was held at the White House. 'Mrs. Adams received her guests with her own calm dignity and grace,' says Mrs. Richards. 'No one would have guessed that the house was half finished, the principal stairs still lacking, her china stolen and her husband defeated. She was mistress not only of the White House but of the situation.'

In 1801, John Adams bought the rambling old colonial house in Quincy built by Leonard Vassal, a West Indian planter. There he and his Abigail were to celebrate their golden wedding. There they and their Abby were to end their days, and there Abby's Caroline Amelia and Charles's Susan were to be married.

In May, 1801, Mrs. Adams, fresh from the White House
without

without a staircase, began setting out raspberry bushes and strawberry plants. She writes Abby to picture her in the dairy at 5 A.M. skimming milk, while the ex-President can be found in his fields overseeing the haymakers. Haymaking and cream-skimming were not the entire order of the day, however. Josiah Quincy — son of that Josiah who would not let Mr. Adams marry him off to Nellie Custis — recalls as a little boy of six or seven that Mrs. Adams always dressed handsomely, 'in rich silks and laces.' Because, we feel sure, she felt it due to John Adams's wife.

Few Smith-Adams letters of this period seem to have been preserved. In August, 1801, Abby writes sadly to her mother of the death of good Dr. Bailey — that same Dr. Bailey whose orders the Colonel disobeyed the morning he got out of bed to cut down the bridge over which General Howe had hoped to pass. Dr. Bailey, an overworked health officer, had caught a fever from some Irish emigrants in quarantine at Staten Island. We do not always remember that we had health officers and quarantines that long ago.

Realizing, not without some bitterness, that neither her good father nor her generous husband has received his deserts at the hands of the country, Abby voices a bit of disillusioned philosophy in this letter: 'I think those persons much the happiest who take no part in public life. The uncertain honors are a miserable compensation for the sacrifice of time and talents.'

But Pappa never loses his zest in life. He writes vigorously to his daughter, as to another politician, concerning some pamphlets vilifying himself that she has sent him.

'To read so much malignant dullness' (a priceless phrase) 'is an odious task, but it cannot well be avoided. I have the history, too, of my administration.' (A Tale Told by an Idiot, so Pappa called it in retrospect. Let one who has been at pains to present him as a humorless egotist not overlook these moments.) 'The history of the Clintonian Faction, as it is called, I shall be glad to see. The society he asserts to exist, I fear is of more consequence than you seem to be aware of. There is another set of beings who seem to have an unlimited influence. They are a detachment, I fear, from a very black regiment in Europe, which
was

was more than once described to me by Stockdale of Piccadilly, whom you must have seen at my house in Grosvenor Square. "Mr. Adams," said the bookseller, "I know one hundred gentlemen in London of great learning and ingenuity, excellent writers upon any subject, any one of whom I can hire at any time for one guinea a day, to write upon any theme, for or against any cause, in praise, or in defamation of any character." A number of the most profligate of these have come to this country very hungry, and are getting their bread by destroying all distinction between right and wrong, truth and falsehood.

'You speak of "moderate people on both sides"; if you know of any such, I congratulate you on your felicity. All I know of that description are of no more consequence than if they were none. I mourn over the accumulated disgraces we are bringing on ourselves, but I can do nothing.

'The prisoners from St. Domingo will be dangerous settlers in the southern states. The French care very little whether turning them loose is insult or injury, provided we will cordially receive, or tamely connive at them.

'My love to Col. Smith and the children. The young gentlemen, I hope, think of Greece and Italy.' Mr. Adams was ever strong for the classics.

Strange that envy never ceased to dog William Smith's footsteps. Often the envious one was placed above him, but the very sight of the Colonel — proud, magnificent, invincible — incited resentment in the competitive and the covetous. Yet when his eye — that perhaps too often looked over and above their meanness — paused to rest sternly upon the slanderer, fear moved in the coward's heart. So it was with Colonel Troup, Alexander Hamilton's closest friend, who circulated calumnies against him in Washington. The Colonel gave him a bad fright and (February 16, 1803) tells Aaron Burr about it in a vein courageously light, enclosing Colonel Troup's written retractions.

'You will observe he takes the charges back and swallows the falsehood like a biped. . . . His agitations you can better conceive than I describe. . . . He stands tottering on the brink of perjury, for he gave in evidence before a jury on oath the substance of what he apologizes for. . . . He has been violently rubbing

bing his head ever since Saturday, and if his family Doctor by cooling draughts does not soon quiet his nerves it is expected he will turn grey or bald. . . . Do me the favor to have these letters reprinted at Washington that those who have perused with avidity the base calumny may take a lesson. How they can presume to Sport with the Character of any of the few — the honorable few — the Band of Brothers! Judge Benson and Lawrence are with him but know not how to get him out of the Scrape. Hamilton has been applied to, but refuses to meet, saying Troup has fallen into unfortunate hands, for there is no milk & water in the composition of his antagonist.'

Mr. Adams would assure us that Colonel Troup — for whom William Smith had done many favors in the past — was only Hamilton's cat's-paw. Certainly it was Hamilton's great ambition to be recognized as the brilliant military commander and strategist that Colonel Smith really was.

In 1803 Colonel Smith again served as Secretary of the Society of the Cincinnati, and in 1804 he was again chosen for president. His camaraderie and enthusiasm must have made him popular, for this was his third term as president.

There is a letter from Abby to her mother that year, written during Mrs. Adams's convalescence from another illness, expressing her terror at the thought of losing her — a grief she was never called upon to suffer. The letter sounds decidedly depressed. Perhaps the arrival of voluminous letters from Europe in a fine flourishing Spanish hand were causing her some uneasiness. The Colonel must have been in communication with Miranda at this time.

'MY DEAR MOTHER:

'I have suffered a great deal of anxiety on account of your indisposition. At times I feel as if I could almost fly to see you and be with you. When I lose you this world will appear to me a desert. . . . I do not complain, but my mind has suffered much; perhaps I am too prone to anticipate evil [she had come to fear the envious tongues by now]. We have all some failings; none of us are perfect. I have never found that those who were disposed to condemn the follies of others were the most perfect themselves. . . . Half the people in the world have nothing to
say,

say, if they did not meddle with the affairs of others. I can say with Hamlet,

“How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,
Seem all the uses of this world.”

In 1804, Aaron Burr ended the career of Alexander Hamilton. ‘Burr,’ observes Mr. Adams, ‘found himself thwarted, persecuted, calumniated by a Wandering Stranger. . . . The deep malice of Hamilton against Burr, and his indefatigable Exertions to defame him are little known. I knew so much of it that I wondered a Duel had not taken Place before. . . . I could have produced such a Duel at any Moment for seven Years.’

That year Maria Empes died. This was the ‘little Miss Jefferson’ who had found so comforting a haven in the hospitable Adams’s home in London. At the news of Jefferson’s bereavement, Mrs. Adams’s warm heart overflowed with old memories, and, despite estrangement, she wrote to him. Jefferson replied with deep feeling, speaking of Maria’s affection for them. ‘To the last, after long separations, whether I had heard from you, and how you did, were among the earliest of her enquiries.’

Mrs. Adams answered, of course, and Jefferson wrote again. This correspondence, together with a little sly connivance on the part of good Dr. Rush, was the ultimate means of bringing about the reconciliation between John Adams and Jefferson.

There are two letters in 1805 from the Colonel to Abby while she and Caroline and William were making a visit in Quincy. The first has to do with a parental matter — although the Spanish would creep in.

‘NEW YORK, Sept. 3—1805

‘MY DEAR

‘I am content that you should act as your wisdom dictates relative to our Children with you.

‘I expect a long letter giving an account of the great Commencement’ (at Harvard, of course). ‘I have written Caroline & shall write William. Inclosed is a letter from our son John. . . .

‘After this I shall not trouble you with the newspapers — their batteries are silenced relative to me — they point their Guns at Governors. . . . There are nine line of Battle ships
English

I opened it
thinking it
an outside
cover & did
not read it

New York Sept^r 3^d 1805

My dear

I have just received your favor of the 26th ult^o
I am content that you should act as your wisdom
dictates relative to our children with you, -

I expect a long letter giving an account of the
great Commencement - I have written Caroline
& shall write William - I enclosed is a letter from
our son John, all parts of the family are in health

after this I shall not trouble you with the
papers - these Batteries are silenced relative
to me - they point their guns at Governor, and
his family - There are nine line of Battle
ships English with transports and attendants frigates
arrived in the River St. Johns, in East Florida, for the
purpose as is said of taking the Florida's, the Spaniards
are in great consternation -

Love to all

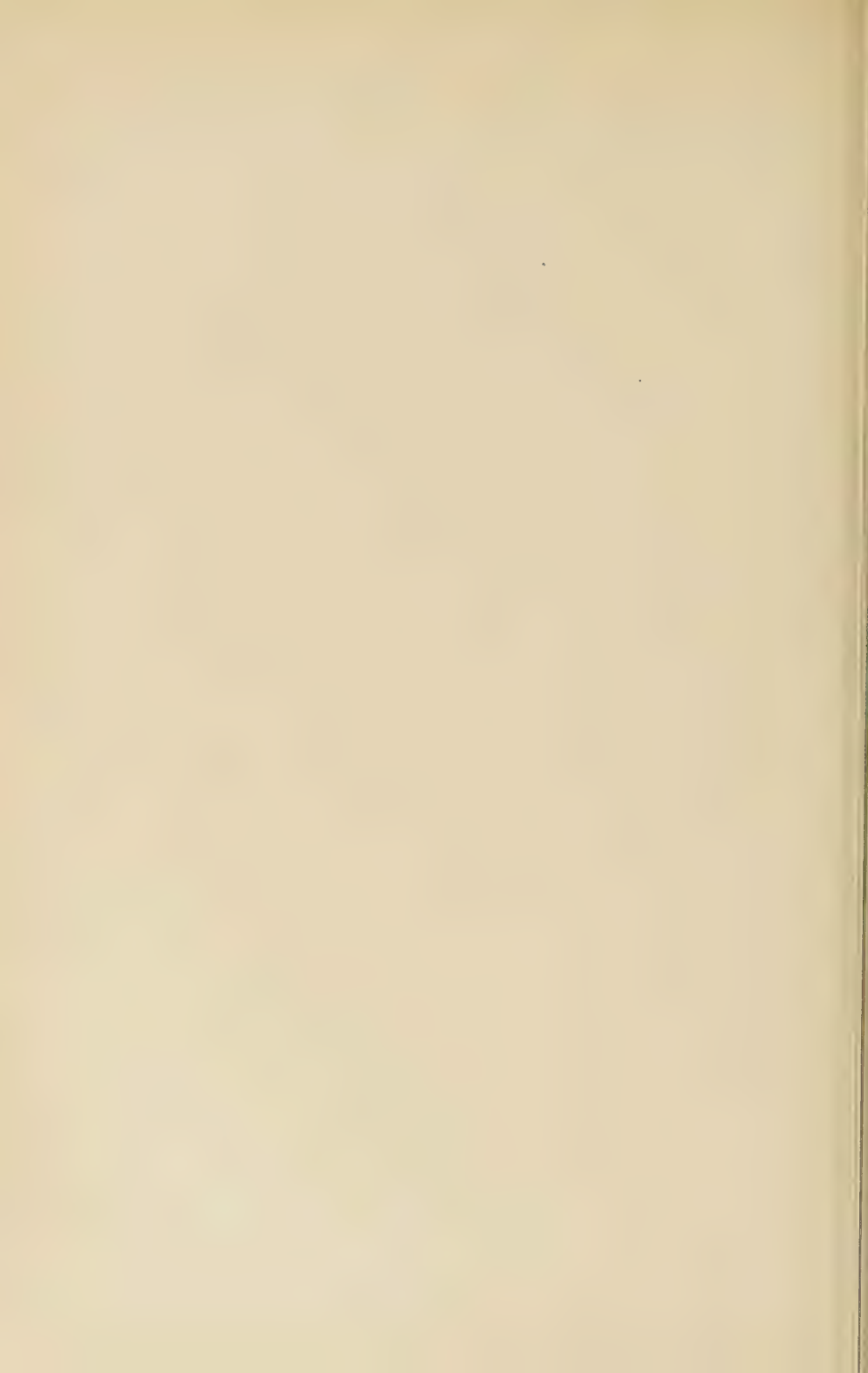
Yours truly

W. Smith

Mrs Smith

LETTER FROM COLONEL SMITH TO HIS WIFE SENT UNDER COVER
TO JOHN ADAMS

Insert: John Adams's notation on outside



English with Transports and attendant Frigates arrived in the River St. Johns in East Florida, for the purpose as is said of taking the Florida's. The Spaniards are in great consternation.'

This time the Colonel is 'Yours truly.' We are sure he meant it.

His next is a sympathetic answer to the tale of Pappa's wrongs. It makes no reference to his own grievances, but consoles her with prospects of post-mortem appreciations of Pappa at his true worth.

'NEW YORK, *September 4th*, 1805

'MY DEAR:

'I believe that yesterday I answered your letter of the 27th, but did not particularly reply to the contents of yours of the 24th. . . . "All men," says Knox, "are so much inclined to flatter their own pride by detracting from the reputation of others, that, even if we were able to maintain an immaculate conduct, it would be difficult to preserve an immaculate character." Nothing more easy than to barb by slander; nothing more arduous than to extract the dart. Yet those who were once its victims, become in time its cherished favorites.

'The merit of a great man, defamed and hooted at as long as his ears and heart would have been sensible to the acclamations of applause, generally waits but his death, to be fully and clamorously recognized and admired: this truth we and our children will notice when your good father pays the debt of nature.

'Though there is no situation in life, wherein the friendship and assistance of others is not necessary, yet how few there are who give themselves a right to claim a mutual return of kindness and affection. . . . Could we banish envy and detraction from the world, we might hope to experience a portion of that felicity which benevolent spirits may expect to enjoy hereafter, and, instead of making this life a scene of strife and animosity, we should convert it into an abode of comfort, if not a state of bliss.'

The Colonel's failure to reach the high places for which he was so abundantly equipped had not embittered him, but perhaps as he grew older it increased his reserve. There is reason to believe that, devoted as he was to his wife, he did not take her
into

into his confidence in the matter of Miranda's plans then under discussion, although young William Steuben knew.

From 1801 to 1806 the Smiths spent their winters in New York and their summers in East Chester. William Steuben grew up and entered Columbia, the Colonel continued to be Surveyor of Customs. The office, although a less interesting one than his talents deserved, was honorable and lucrative. The scene seemed peaceful enough, but the Three Dark Sisters were at work, muttering over the pot.

CHAPTER XXXII

MIRANDA THE PRECURSOR AND WHAT HE PRECURRED

EIGHTEEN-HUNDRED AND SIX was the fatal year of the Miranda expedition, connection with which ruined Colonel Smith's career. From John Adams's correspondence, the record of the case in the decisions of the Supreme Court for that year, aided by other fugitive allusions, we can piece the story together.

Writing long afterwards to his friend James Lloyd, John Adams records his opinion of Miranda and his works, which was the kind of opinion legal gentlemen from New England are likely to have of Mirandas in general. Mr. Adams had scant sympathy with impractical idealists. 'It is certain that he filled the heads of many of the young officers with visions of wealth, free-trade and republican governments for South America,' he remarks. 'Hamilton was one of his most intimate friends, and Colonel Smith, I presume, was another.' But the late Mr. Hamilton was ever careful not to endanger his personal ambitions.

Let us pause and listen to the *post-mortem* ravings of good Mr. Adams on the subject of Francisco Miranda, revolutionist and patriot, who was the cause of so much undeserved pain to his Abby. Oh, yes, Mr. Adams had heard of the Miranda-Pitt-King expedition before his family became involved, but he had thrust it aside with a Podsnapian gesture. 'I considered him a vagabond, a Quixot, an adventurer, and thought no more about him.'

But Miranda appeared in Philadelphia, where he visited Dr. Rush and quite turned the good doctor's head. He had a faculty for turning heads; a beautiful fiery creature, from his portrait, with a cameo profile. Mr. Adams, however, pooh-poohed Dr. Rush's enthusiasm and was cynical about the South American's unauthorized knowledge of the innermostness of European courts. Miranda left good Dr. Rush with his head spinning, and hurried off to Washington, where he talked with Jefferson and Madison, who most certainly listened.

'Miranda's

'Miranda's expedition,' Mr. Adams remarks darkly, 'was infinitely better known to Madison and Jefferson than to me. How can I proceed in this narrative? The next news I heard was that Miranda had sailed three weeks before, and that my grandson, William Steuben Smith, had been taken from college when senior sophister, on the point of taking his degree, and sent with Miranda to liberate South America.'

Plainly Mr. Adams does not consider South America worth liberating, at least not by an ex-President's grandson. We get a feeling, too, that his grandfather has suffered more at having William Steuben whisked out of college before graduation than at the thought that he is in imminent danger of his life. However we may regret this viewpoint on the part of Mr. Adams, he comes right out and says as much in the next paragraph.

'... I saw the ruin of my only daughter and her good hearted enthusiastic husband, and had no other hope or prayer than that the ship with my grandson in it might be sunk in the gulf stream. I never had the most distant intimation or suspicion of this expedition until it had been at sea for weeks.'

Colonel Smith, we divine, had an inkling that Mr. Adams did not feel emotional about Miranda and the wrongs of Venezuela.

'I gave up my grandson as lost forever,' Mr. Adams declares — and we cannot escape the impression that William might as well die as fail to take his degree at Columbia. 'But what could I think of his father? ... Was he more mad than Pitt and King?'

'In time news came that my grandson was in prison in Caracas with many of his companions, waiting for trial and execution' — Mr. Adams speaks as if they were synonymous. Perhaps they mostly are in South America.

The Spanish ambassador, Marquis Yrujo — and what a beautiful creature *he* was! Gilbert Stuart has preserved him for us, also his piquant American wife Sally McKean, Dolly Madison's friend; Yrujo 'came forward' with offers of interposition in behalf of William Steuben, but, remarks Mr. Adams with a very sweeping gesture, 'No! My blood' (via the veins of William Steuben who may have felt differently about it) 'should flow upon a Spanish scaffold before I would meanly ask or accept a distinction in favor of my grandson. No!' repeats Mr. Adams,

Adams, with greater emphasis, 'he should share the fate of his comrades and fellow prisoners.'

This, it must be remembered, was written seven years later in retrospect, when William Steuben had taken that interrupted degree and was safely under the wing of the irreproachable John Quincy in Russia. Doubtless tender-hearted Mr. Adams did not feel nearly so rhetorical while his Abby's heart was heavy for that adventurous boy, her first born, and so plainly his father's son.

The Colonel, Mr. Adams tells us (or rather Mr. Lloyd to whom the letter was addressed), answers Yrujo in a manner that, Mr. Adams considers, 'atoned in some degree for his former imprudence, and in language consistent with his professed principles, however erroneous, in the whole enterprise. In short,' Mr. Adams concludes with approval, 'he replied in the tone of the elder Brutus when he sacrificed his sons for conspiracy with Tarquin.'

We feel that Mr. Adams, writing while the imprudent Colonel was still alive, *does* lick his chops a bit at this sacrificial thought. The New England worship of self-sacrifice at times almost amounts to sensuality.

We realize from this peroration that, creature of heart and impulse though he was, Colonel Smith conformed fully to the high ethics of the time, which held that no man should ask for himself, or his, special privilege or exemptions. 'What favor have I ever asked of government or people?' Adams demands of his diary — or perhaps of Mr. Lloyd — 'Never once since I came out from my mother's womb.'

Our dear Mr. Adams has a delectable absurdity in such moments, but the smile fades when we contemplate the Colonel, deserted, standing up alone to face trial before the Supreme Court, a tragic figure. According to the testimony of one Dr. Douglass, Colonel Smith had advance knowledge of the plans of Miranda, who desired to liberate South America in general, and his native Venezuela in particular, from the despotic yoke of Spain. The Colonel must have been in correspondence for some time with Miranda, who was in Europe plotting, as Latin Americans, even the best of them, will. Conspiracy is to them the very breath of life.

One thing is clear from the testimony. The Colonel did not send his son as Miranda's 'aide' on the wave of a sudden quixotic impulse, nor did the boy, catching fire at the inflammatory talk, volunteer without his father's knowledge or consent; for Dr. Douglass testified that before Miranda arrived from England the Colonel had told him 'that he expected a grand expedition was on foot and that his son was going.' And when Miranda arrived, looking very handsome, we may be sure, and bursting with emotion, it was the Colonel who chartered the ship in which he sailed, the *Leander*, a merchant vessel used in the Santo Domingo trade, the property of one Samuel Ogden. The Colonel, no conspirator, but a bright target in the open, presented Miranda to Mr. Ogden and Mr. Lewis, one of Mr. Ogden's captains. This not only clearly identified him with the expedition, but subsequently involved Mr. Ogden, whose case, however, following Colonel Smith's, was dismissed.

An humble, honest citizen by the name of Fink also testified that he had engaged a corporal, a sergeant, and twelve soldiers for the Colonel, who had paid them liberally in advance. This, in words of contemporaneous law, 'manifested the agency and participation of the defendant.'

Colonel Smith's 'participation' is easily understood. Liberty, liberation, were in the air. First the American Revolution, then the French, had fired the imaginations of the militant and the generous, the fanatic and the philosopher. Superficially considering his act, it may seem that he *was* rash, impulsive, thoughtlessly adventurous. But do we find impulse in the face of the Gilbert Stuart portrait? By impulse we commonly understand the readily moved surface, and that it is clear he did not have. He had a soul that took fire at the vision of emancipation, and he did not, of course, understand South-American psychology or politics. How much better do we understand them today? Liberty had been his lifelong ideal. He had fought for it in his youth in the Northern States; it was his ambition, and his deep spiritual desire, to help in the working out of the political salvation of the southern half of a continent, whose interests, in his imagination, were conjoined in a common brotherhood. Napoleon, probably, more than any one else, was responsible for the widespread Monroe-Doctrine sentiment in our land in
the

the early years of the nineteenth century. Had it not been for the strong tie of wife and the younger children, there is little doubt that the Colonel himself, although now fifty-one, would have volunteered in Miranda's cause. Naturally he did not question the authoritative nature of an enterprise, encouraged and promoted by the President and his Secretary of State.

Jefferson had long had the Spanish-American bee in his bonnet — not, we fear, from any profound yearning for their emancipation and advancement, but with a shrewd eye upon the opportunities offered to himself and his government. The trial of Aaron Burr throws light upon this point. When the Spanish Government demanded investigation and indictments for violation of the Neutrality laws, Mr. Jefferson must have shaken in his boots. And it was, of course, because he was in no position to face the inquiries of a court that he and little Mr. Madison 'kep' on sayin' nothin' in Washington, and that worthy Robert Smith, Secretary of the Navy, Jacob Wagner, and Mr. Thornton, 'Gentlemen under the Secretary of State,' were restrained from testifying as witnesses for the defense. Had Jefferson and Madison not realized that their connection with the Miranda expedition could readily be proved, they would hardly have maintained this Brer Rabbit policy.

Colonel Smith's affidavit was couched in stern and unmistakable terms. It flatly stated that 'The expedition was set on foot with the knowledge and approbation of the President,' and that 'he has been informed and doth verily believe that James Madison and Robert Smith are prevented from attending by the order and interposition of the President of the United States.'

Miranda (who was not present, being busy with the technique of escape) also charged Jefferson with aiding and approving his expedition.

Admirers of Jefferson will perhaps say that the thing was bigger than a personal matter; that it was not only his own skin he was saving at the Colonel's expense; that if the approval and participation of the President of the United States had been proved, it must inevitably have meant a war with Spain.

But Jefferson had been treacherous to Aaron Burr, his Vice-President, whom he hated; to young Edmond Genêt, for a time his

his tool; to John Adams, his friend and his superior officer, of whom he was jealous; to Washington whom he longed to succeed. And it is not surprising that, though he was fond — in his fashion — of Abby and the Colonel, he should have sacrificed them to save himself. But the Colonel, who could fling his all upon the altar of a Cause, was yet not of the fiber tamely to accept injustice. His own honor and that of all dear to him was at stake. He stood accused before the world, and naturally he presented his justification — which cost him his government position. For as soon as the trial was over, Jefferson promptly removed him from office. Was that a necessary gesture? If so, Jefferson, safe in his proud position as executive, could surely have contrived some compensation for the ruined man.

The trial began in April, 1806. It was long and very learned. A note in the old volume observes, 'The offense of conspiracy is more difficult to ascertain precisely than any other for which an indictment lies.' The law under which the offense, classified as a 'High Misdemeanor,' came, was of 'setting on foot, or providing means for, a military expedition against a nation with which the United States is at peace.'

A very high-sounding description of the modest little armada of one vessel and a few schooners in which poor Miranda, with his head in the clouds, and William Steuben Smith, an undergraduate of nineteen, who had never been farther from New York than Quincy and Philadelphia since his infancy in Europe, sailed away on February 2, 1806, confident that all Venezuela would fall and kiss their feet as they stepped off the gangplank, rising only to take up arms against Spain under the leadership of Francisco Miranda and William Steuben Smith.

Young William probably heard the morning stars sing together as Miranda spoke winged words under the awesome brilliance of the tropic moon, or in the dancing sunlight as they slipped over the blue waves of the Caribbean. The last thing William visioned was that dank and dark prison in Caracas. To him the whole experience, after all, was just part of the glad adventure of youth. It was not he who was the real sufferer from that misunderstanding of Latin-American psychology which still afflicts our countrymen.

'I have no idea that the Spaniards in South America are capable

capable of a free government,' observed the unsympathetic but astute Mr. Adams.

Poor Miranda! His 'expedition' ended with that farcical comic-opera flavor which seems inseparable from South-American revolutions. Venezuela did not kiss Mr. Miranda's feet. Instead it displayed a most mortifying disinclination to be saved from the hated Spanish yoke. At Aruba, proclamations in Spanish were distributed, headed by Miranda's name as general and commander-in-chief. Nothing else seems to have happened. A few languid gentlemen with soft black neckties doubtless read the pronunciamientos, propped against a portico and rolling a cigarette — read them and strolled away, too proud to fight! At Porto Cabello, though the inhabitants still declined to be saved, the Spanish awoke. An engagement with a Spanish Government vessel ensued, with the loss of two schooners and many men. Result, Miranda was obliged to take French leave, and young William Steuben with several of his associates was cast into that jail at Caracas from which, although it must have been peculiarly insanitary and cheerless, his Grandfather Adams rhetorically refused to rescue him.

As for the Colonel, victim of the spell-binder, Miranda, he was left to face the music at home. But the Colonel was not the only one to be mesmerized by the Venezuelan; if William Smith was deceived by Miranda, we must remember that Miranda was also deceived by himself.

'Nothing seems to have been considered by Miranda in this expedition,' remarked Mr. Adams, acidly, to Dr. Rush.

Colonel Smith had one of the most eminent men of his day for his defense, the eloquent Irishman, Thomas Aldis Emmett, who had just been made attorney-general of New York State. Associated with him were Washington Morton, Cadwallader Ogden, Josiah Ogden Hoffman (Gilbert Stuart painted him too), and Richard Hanson. The defendant's honorable character was often referred to, and, of course, they knew, one and all, that the poor, frank, fearless Colonel was the sacrificial goat. The learned argument hinged upon the point of neutrality, what constituted a one hundred per cent neutrality, and was the United States in that pure and unsullied position with regard to Spain. It was decided, as we knew it would be, that Mr. Madison

son

son could not be subpoenaed. It would not do to embarrass a Secretary of State so painfully.

Judge Talmadge in charging the jury remarked that 'The undertaking may be of itself great and glorious, worthy of the breast of a good man glowing with the desire for universal emancipation of the oppressed —' then followed the necessary involved, yet gentle, 'but.'

The jury was out two hours and gave an unanimous verdict for acquittal. The trial had lasted over three-months.

But Miranda must have been something finer and nobler than the Adams family believed. The Precursor, his followers called him. Of him, Napoleon remarked, 'He is a Quixote with this difference, he is not crazy. The man has a sacred fire in his soul.'

Reading this we can understand how Colonel Smith should not only have fallen under the spell of the Venezuelan in his ardent youth, but in later years still believed in the Precursor, the friend of Bolivar. To him the Miranda expedition was no hare-brained Quixotic enterprise, but a sacred cause. William Smith had much of the crusading knight in his soul.

How terrible the awakening! He who had held his country's honor so high stood accused of violating her laws. In his effort to bring the precious gift of freedom to another people, he had involved his America in difficulties with another government. He had not foreseen that outcome.

'In his honesty he is like Monroe,' Jefferson wrote to Madison in 1787. 'Turn his soul wrong side out and you will not find a speck.' But Mr. Jefferson whose boots, waistcoats, chariot harness, harpsichords the Colonel had chosen, whose favorite traveling companion he had been, who had declared his soul to be without a speck — Mr. Jefferson turned a deaf ear in his hour of need.

The remainder of that year was a time of break-up. The Colonel was reaping the whirlwind — a tragic harvest. Abby, Caroline, and John went to Quincy — unfailing refuge!

'William,' Mr. Adams wrote to Dr. Rush, 'is now to my great grief in Trinidad,' seeming to suggest that there was something morally or geographically unsound about the bituminous island.

'A don Quixot expedition,' Mrs. Adams wrote to Mercy Warren. 'It has been a source of much anxiety to us and to his mother.'

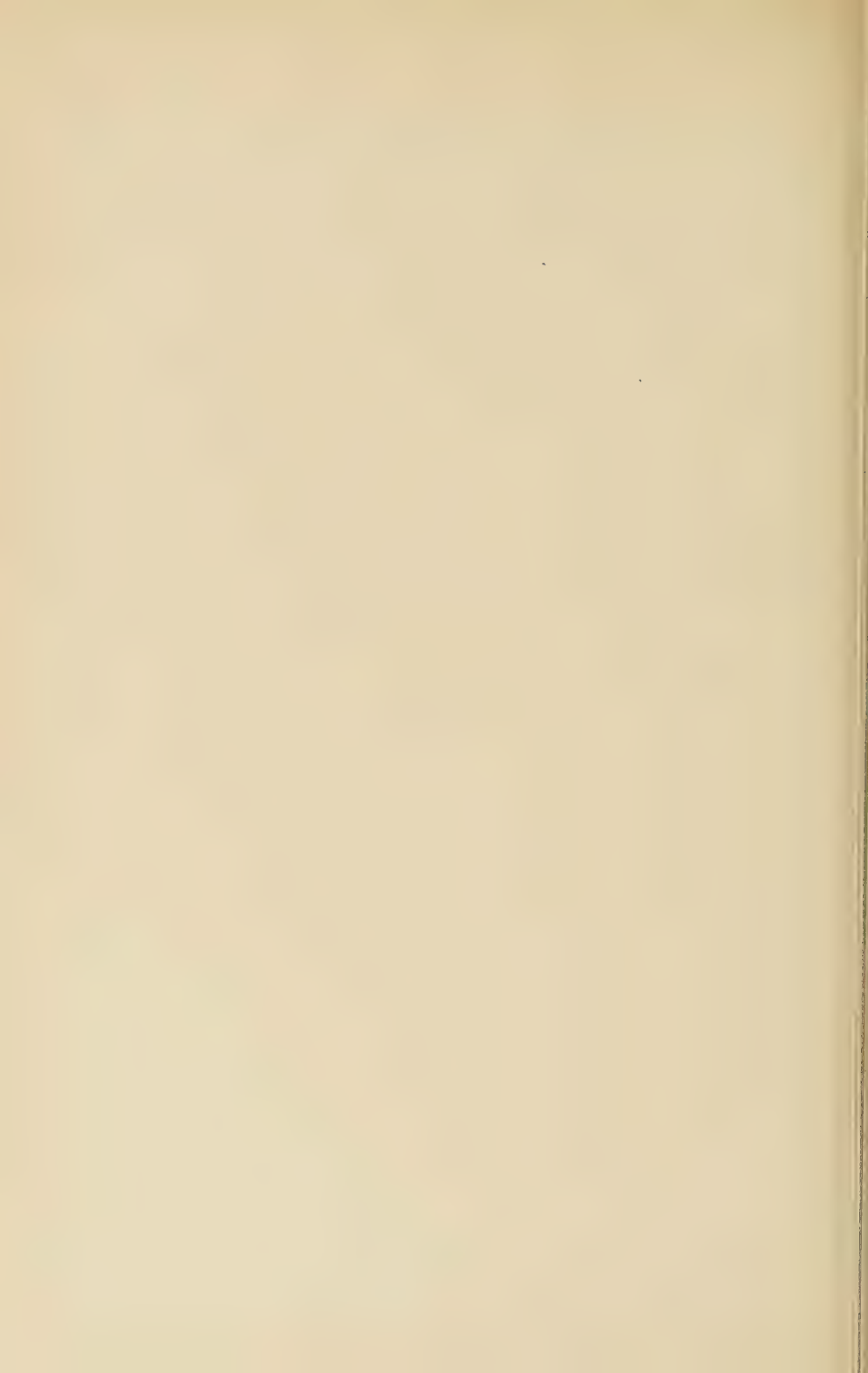
mother.' But William was his father's son, and had enjoyed his first adventurous flight; it was the Colonel who paid the price. Deprived of his position by the President, whose participation he had dared to expose, he found himself suddenly a poor man. He had never known frugal habits of living. He was generous and spent his money freely as he made it. His brother Justus, a born pioneer, had already settled in the valley at Lebanon. We can guess at the accumulation of forces that sent him into the wilderness at last, far from the world he had known.

PART IV
THE WILDERNESS

1808-1816

'Chenango . . . where one of the most gallant and skillful officers of our Revolution is probably destined to spend the rest of his days, not in the field of glory but in the hard labors of husbandry.'

Letter from John Adams to Jefferson



CHAPTER XXXIII

THE VALLEY

'Moving through a mirror clear
Shadows of the world appear —'

IN 1808, Caroline tells us, her father 'retired to a farm at Lebanon where he interested himself in agricultural pursuits.' Oh, smoothly gliding mid-nineteenth-century pen! Dispossessed of position and income, demoted for no real dishonor, what was left but to seek refuge in the remnant of those townships and counties on the edge of the wilderness, purchased in the day of his prosperity, when he could afford that wide magnificent gesture. There, too late in life for the hopes and thrills of path-breaking, he built his modest home^{*} — no Folly now — those days were past — and proceeded to gather up the broken threads of his life as best he might. It was more than a year after the Colonel's acquittal before the new home was ready for Abby and Caroline — for John had left them to study law in New York.

We may be sure that his brave gayety, humor, resourcefulness did not fail in those days of makeshift and deprivation, but it was life on a broken wing. After his gallant youth spent in the service of his country, he found himself at fifty-three, forced to wring a hard living from the soil, had the pain of seeing his Friend, once 'the American beauty' of foreign courts, the honored guest of General Washington, setting her frail strength to household tasks, a strength already sapped, although neither of them knew it yet, by the most dread of maladies.

For it is evident, from a letter of John Adams to Jefferson, that Abby's affliction had begun in 1806, two years before their life was torn up by the roots; that she was, in fact, a slowly dying woman when struggling with the hardships of path-breaking. Modern medical opinion admits mental distress to be one of the causes of cancer, and what agony that trial must have been to her proud and sensitive spirit.

Her love for her Colonel never failed during that year of waiting

^{*} This house remained standing until quite recently, when it was destroyed by fire.

ing when his letters were all that she had. 'If I can persuade her to give me an extract of his letter I will enclose it,' Mr. Adams wrote that year to Dr. Rush. Was it just her tenderness for those brave devoted letters that caused Abby to withhold? Or had she come to tremble at the very thought of trusting any word of his to further cruelty of misrepresentation?

And how did Jefferson, safe and sound in Washington, feel about the man who was paying the penalty he escaped? It does not appear that he suffered, because, however necessary it may have been for him to protect himself and let his friend bear the penalty of unsuccessful championship, he could surely have found some way to save the Colonel from this bitter enforced retreat.

Yet, whatever William Smith may have felt about Jefferson, he apparently permitted himself no expression of that resentment found in the letters of the Adams family and their adherents. He bore his wounds in silence like a soldier.

One would like to think that he found peace and happiness in that strange place, but there are no more light-hearted letters after that last and hardest blow of fate. Although he was a philosopher and courageous, I am afraid that to the end he bore the scars of Jefferson's desertion and the pain of the injury he had unwittingly dealt to those he loved. He had brought his Friend low, he was deprived of honorable office and the means of support. He had — or so it then seemed to him — robbed his children of opportunity in life.

There were compensations, of course. Two of his brothers, Justus and James, were with him, and their neighbors named the place for them, Smith's Valley. Justus Smith was one of those men who understood the Indians and was beloved by them. He was a great favorite of Mrs. Adams, who could never become reconciled to his genial celibacy.

Later, the Colonel's sisters, Margaret St. Hillaire, Belinda (Mrs. Clarkson), and Nancy, who afterwards became Mrs. Masters, joined the family group. Perhaps the up-State lands were all that were left in the little red trunk!

Traditions of the Colonel's family, and especially of the Colonel himself, lingered in the valley up to fifty years ago. His personality was one that left its mark. They had begun by 1808 to regard

regard the Revolutionary soldiers with veneration. 'He remained to the last,' a local historian tells us, 'a proud and high-spirited man.'

But social relationships are for the summer in pioneer settlements. The snowfall is heavy in those parts and the winter months must have been terrible. Weeks must have passed when their scattered friends and neighbors could not get to them. On these days we can picture the Colonel telling many a thrilling tale of the Revolution around the great log fire to the little girl — on his knee, of course — who long afterwards was to set them down in facile mid-nineteenth-century phrases, a little off as to dates and places, but with one fact always clear in her loving heart, that her dear father was a very great man. Caroline probably always believed that America might still be an English colony had not William Stephens Smith drawn his sword in her defense.

The only picture we have of their life in Smith Valley — rather a Valley of the Shadow for both — is in reflex in Mr. and Mrs. Adams's letters. In their answers we see them pass as in the mirror of the Lady of Shalott. . . .

A patriarchal household, the old Adams house at Quincy, a center of love and cheer, where all the children and grandchildren came and went. Thomas Boylston Adams's children, 'Abbe' and Eliza; Susan and Abby, the fatherless children of Charles and Sally; Louisa Smith, the devoted niece who made her home with them; John Quincy's John, Charles, and George; and, almost every week-end, John Quincy himself with his wife Louisa, came out from Boston. We are bewildered by the multitudinous Johns and Abigails, but Grandmother Abigail's sharp pen individualizes them all.

In these delightful gossip letters we hear again of Aunt and Uncle Cranch — decrepit now and suffering from strange disorders; Lucy too — Royall Tyler forgotten in the responsibilities of a blind husband and five children — familiar figures against a fitting background of neighbors, old friends, and ancient enemies.

Very often Mrs. Adams writes about William, who, rescued from the clutches of the firebrand Miranda, is continuing his interrupted education in the safe hands of his Grandfather

father Adams. They were very fond of William. The spontaneous Smith temperament, possessed to some extent by all Abby's children, was attractive to the more reserved Adams family.

Those were the days of Mr. Jefferson's Embargo: 'The embargo distresses us all,' Mrs. Adams writes to Abby, 'yet it is a measure I am convinced best calculated to avert the horrors of war, of any which, prest on all sides as our Government were, could have been resorted to, cruel & oppressive as it appears, and hard as it is to be borne.'

And William copied a letter from his Uncle John Quincy (no light task!) telling all about how he came to side with Mr. Jefferson, now the enemy of his house, on the subject of the Embargo. 'As he says he has weighed well the subject before he went' — we can be sure of that — 'I presume he considered Mr. Madison the fittest man upon that side of the question, and one of the most sensible and candid of Virginians. In the present state of our country, union is necessary to our very existence.'

"'With respect to foreign influence,'" Mrs. Adams quotes her distinguished son, "'the opinions and personal feelings of the President & Secretary of State, have perhaps always inclined too much toward France . . . but it is my candid opinion, that so far as relates to official acts, the neutrality of the present administration has been as fair and impartial as it was under either of those which preceded.'"

'William this day has finished his school much to the satisfaction of his employers. The Army seems to be his object, and his Grandfather has told him that he should not have any objection to writing both to the President and Mr. Madison & the Secretary of War. I have also told him that I would write to the President.'

Outwardly at war, but with the eternal truce of friendship in their hearts. 'Several young Gentlemen have gone from Boston to Washington for the purpose of engaging in the service. Upon this head he will consult both his father and you. I feel loth he should leave us. Little Abby grows daily more interesting, dresses herself up and shakes her hand with a goodby mamma, (by Grandmamma, go and see Aunt Miff and Caroline). Susan
has

has written to Caroline, what kind of a letter I know not, as she would not let me see it. I enclose it however.'

A few days later, William goes home.

'William left us on Thursday, and on Fryday set his face toward you. We parted with him with much reluctance, his whole conduct has been so Satisfactory that our blessings and good wishes will follow him whatever his destination in Life. To the reading of Law he appears averse, and he offered weighty reasons against it. The bent of his mind appears to be for a military Life. The present State of our country bodes employment in that department more than I wish it did; . . . I sent a few articles which I presumed would be acceptable to you and to Caroline' (now so far from shops and cities). 'I might sometimes forward you a few necessities if any mode of conveyance could be pointed out. We have begun to prepare our Garden. There is a general stagnation of business, the farmer knows not how to hire labour, or to pay for it rather. Commerce is dead and agriculture is chief mourner. Napoleon is hunting out new inventions to draw tighter the restriction with which he has bound commerce and oblige us if possible to take a part for or against him. Another unhappy affair has taken place in the East Indies between the British and Americans upon the old grievance of impressing men, and Blood has been shed upon both sides. All events are under the Controul of a supreme being.' (Capital C, small s and b. It might be interesting sometime to psycho-analyze the temperamental capitalization of the eighteenth century.) 'William will tell you all about us, of uncles and Aunts, little folkes and great. His uncle Cranch he did not know as sicke. So good a man is ready to depart when called for, yet we wish to keep him here longer. . . .

'You must write to me frequently. I shall want to know how you come on, what success you have had with maple sugar &c what help you have, what sort of people you have as neighbors, whether you can use a wheel carriage, whether you have a physician near you.

'I saw Miss Hinkley in Boston. William has taken Letters to her, and his Grandfather gave him one to Governor Strong. My regards to Mrs. St Hillair and Love to the Col.

'All the Domesticks join in Love to Dear Caroline. So Caroline

line may skip light as the faun, since she is always remembered as the dear delightful Girl whom every Body loves, and no one more than her affectionate Grandmother

‘ABIGAIL ADAMS.’

A month passes with no word from her daughter. Mrs. Adams writes again: ‘It is so long since I received a Letter, that I am anxious. We received William’s letter from Albany and heard by way of Miss Hinkely that his visit was very pleasing to the Governor. I feel anxious for him, the times are very discouraging to a young Man just entering upon the stage of Life. They cannot remain in this stagnant state much longer. We are driven up into the close corner and cannot move but to our own loss and destruction. Our government seems determined to stand still, and wait for the Salvation of the Lord. . . . Your Brother Thomas has enclosed to William a Letter from your Brother J. Q. A. to Mr. Harrison Gray Otis, which will give you a fuller view of our difficulties with England than have been known to you before, I presume, and will give you his reasons for voting for the embargo, a measure he well knew would render him unpopular.’

It is difficult for us to realize to-day the impassioned partisanship of that period. ‘I never expected to see the federal papers so blindly attached to any foreign Nation. English partizans & French partizans (though they are fewer in number) divide our country, whilst the pure and Native American can scarcely find a spot upon which he may place his foot, and make a firm stand against these encroachments.

‘Our little ones are well. The Chinese Chatterer grows daily more interesting. We begin to look quite verdent here, the Gooseberry Bushes have leaves, and our daffies are in Bloom.

‘My Love to Caroline. I hope another Saturday will not pass without bringing Letters to your affectionate Mother

‘ABIGAIL ADAMS

‘Remember me to the Col. to William, and all the rest of the family. I hear Mrs. Long is gone to Scotland with her husband.’

In her next Mrs. Adams recounts the faithless attacks upon John Quincy in ‘papers bearing the title of Federal. I felt my indignation

indignation strongly excited against the writers, tho unknown to me. Upon every occasion they attack your Brother with a venom and spight, which shows fully how much they dread his tallents, and how keenly they feel the force of his replie to Mr. Pickering's Letter.' (Timothy, of course.) 'In proportion as our Family have been engaged in public Life have they shared from one and the other party, obliqui and ill treatment, but I challenge either to produce a single instance, where the honour, independence and safety of the Country has not been the ultimate object of every member of the family; where personal safety has not been hazarded, personal property sacrificed, and the whole long Life of its most ancient Member solely devoted to the public interests. Having given vent to my feelings excited by newspaper revilings I quit the subject, and its Authors, and ask forgiveness for them as I am instructed in Holy Writ, and notice your kind Letters of March 6th and April 24th which I received both together and thank you for them. To hear often from you is a great pleasure to me, one of the few left me in the decline of Life, when the days approach in which we are told there is no pleasure. There is an innocent pleasure to be derived from the renovating season of the spring which charms us even in age. On the 24th of April we cut our first asparagress, on the 25th our daffies Bloomed, our peach & pear & plomb trees are in full Bloom, peas ready to stick. I did not expect to hear that your peas were up; I should like to have you state the progress of your vegetation that we may compare notes. I am glad you have been so successful in making maple sugar. Every manufactor which will render us less dependent is a valuable acquisition. My imagination frequently visits you, and always finds you occupied. To be Idel would be novel altogether to you.'

We hear again of Thomas Adams's children, little 'Abbe' who grew up to marry Thomas Angier, and the 'very Beautifull Baby,' Elizabeth, who never married at all, but whose picture shows her a very beautiful old lady at the end of life.

'Abbe grows a little charmer. She is a daily visitor to the puppy-children, as she calls them. The little one is a very Beautifull Baby.'

We get a complete abstract of Eliza's charms another day: 'a fine chestnut eye, black hair, fair skin, short Limbs and face, a quiet

quiet child. Your Father received William's Letter and was satisfied with his reasons. He sends his Love to you all. Louissa Susan and all the Domesticks desire me to make mention of their high consideration.'

Mrs. Adams's next budget of family news gives us a bit of gossip concerning Sally's disappointing suitor Mr. Minchin. Poor Sally, once a belle, doubtless still a very personable lady, seems to have been rather looked down upon for her disposition to indulge romantic cravings at the advanced age of thirty-eight. Sally did not marry Mr. Minchin, but his figure hovers for a time in the background of the letters.

'Mrs. Adams saw John [Abby's John] in New York who told her that Mr. Minchin was returned and was gone to Philadelphia, he supposed to be married immediately. The last letter but one which I received from Sally she informed me that his Brother had ruined him, and that all her hopes were blasted. I hope she will not marry without a prospect of bettering her situation. Poor Mrs. Buchanan had better have remained single than have encumbered herself with four children, and very small means to suport them. It is best under such circumstances to be a good Calvinist and believe that everything which comes to pass is fore ordained, as I have heard some good women say with respect to children that they must have their number. This doctrine takes away the free agency of man, but I believe serves as a consolation to those who can fully assent to it.

Abby cannot bear to think that her brother is condoning Mr. Jefferson. Her mother reassures her: 'As to supporting all the measures of the Executive, you must be mistaken, he reprobates that destruction of the Navy, that total neglect of defense which so disgraces the present administration, but as it respects the foreign negotiations, he thinks they have been conducted upon fair and honorable ground. He will not heed the abuse and calumny with which the federal presses have teemed. . . . When these quill assailants could find no other motive to attack him, some must needs find fault with style and metaphor' — a not invulnerable spot! And it seems that John Quincy and a very worthy Mr. Baring, a member of parliament married to the beautiful Mrs. Bingham's daughter, have, unknown to each other, published identical opinions on these subjects.

'I have run such a political rigg that I have little room left. Tell Miss Caroline she is in debt to me a Letter. I pray she would inform me how grows the tender plant, and the vine around the Tufted Tree.' Is the Tufted Tree indigenous to Quincy?

In the garden of the Brooks Adams house there is a trelised rose said to be from the very vine Mrs. Adams brought from England. As everything about the place has been preserved with reverent care, it is not unlikely that that rose of today really is a descendant of those mentioned in Mrs. Adams's next letter.

'QUINCY June 19th 1808

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER

'Here we are sitting by a good fire in the parlour, & wearing our winter coats to meeting, whilst our windows are covered with a profusion of roses, our walls decorated with flowers expanding their Beauties to the cold Northern blast which rudely lacerates their delicate texture, unmindfull of their Beauty and heedless of their fragrance.

'I rose the other morning delighted with the visit I had made you, and the pleasing interview I had with you and the Coll, William, your Brother, Mrs. St Hilaire, all but dear Caroline not least beloved, whom I did not see. Your Father accompanied me, and we came rather unexpectedly upon you. I found you so cheerful and happy that it augmented the pleasure of my visit, which was only interrupted by the striking of the clock. Although only a dream it left upon my mind so pleasing an impression that I could not refrain communicating it at the Breakfast table. It is some time since I received a Letter from you. Susan received one from Caroline a few days since, full of her lovely, lively spirits which delighted us all.

'... Your brother comes to Quincy almost every Saturday, and passes Sunday with us.'

And Mr. Lloyd, 'A Gentleman of Tallents,' now has his 'room' in the Senate. For staunch John Quincy, unsupported in his resolutions 'for the protection of our seaman subjects,' and other unpopular patriotic measures, 'resigned his seat in the senate like an honest Man and true American, The Federal party

party have acted toward him a most ungenerous part. Let us pull him down by any means, and any falsehood, was the language of their conduct. I cannot say that he has not felt being wounded in the House of his Friends; yet his elevation of mind will enable him to bear it with mildness and patience.

'My best Love and regards to the Coll, who has shared largely in these *Bounties* of his Country and who knows how to estimate good and evil report.' And she closes, characteristically, 'With Love to every Branch of your Family from every twig of ours.'

Undoubtedly the irregularity of Abigail's letters, of which her mother begins to complain, was caused by the grim progress of her malady, while Mrs. Adams, unsuspecting of the truth, is absorbed in the High Cost of the two allied L's — Living and Labor.

'QUINCY July 31, 1808

'Do you know, my Dear Daughter, that the date of your last Letter was the 3d of June, since which I have not received a line from you? . . . Providence has been so bountifull to us this season in the rich and ample supply of grass, that we can neither procure sufficient hands to cut it, or Barns large enough to contain it. We have already cut 80 tons of English Hay. The misfortune is that labour is higher than I ever knew it, it being now in such demand and Hay so low as to be sold at 7 dollars per ton. We have employed 12 men for three weeks past, and for them were obliged to send more than 20 miles. . . . That we have had a weake, timid, cowardly Administration is most certainly true.'

And Mrs. Adams does not hesitate to disagree with her god-like son: 'The impressive embargo, which has cut up our commerce, dispersed our seamen, and brought distress upon the whole country, will terminate, I fear, in disobedience to the Laws, in insurrection and civil war, if a Foreign war does not prevent it. The embargo must be repealed, and the vessels permitted to arm. The people of the Northern States will not suffer it to continue much longer,

'August 8th

'My Letter has lain for a week. The weather has been intensely hot, and we have had company almost every day; there

is not any solitude or retirement in our House now. Abigail is as wild as a Bird, I have little John here too.' (John Quincy's John.) 'He came sick from Boston a month ago, pale as a corpse and so languid I thought he was going into a decline, but he has finely recruited, and is driving around with Abbe enough to craze one. Here sits Susan too, for I have fled to your chamber as a quiet spot in the house, writing a Letter to her Mother, interrupting me every few moments with some question — (hold your peace, Hussy) whom I expect here soon with Abbe. I suppose you are not acquainted with her disappointment. The Gentleman has lost all his property — if he ever had any. His story is that his Brother has ruined him, and that he has lost 80 thousand dollars. He returned according to his engagement and I presume offered to Marry, but I believe Sally declined at present. Your Brother J. Q. A. has become a private Man again, to my entire satisfaction. I never saw him in better health or spirits. . . . Since I began this Letter accounts have reached us, of the resistance of Spain to the usurpations of Bonaparte. . . . Write to me my Dear Daughter, if it be only to tell me of your various occupations. Love to the Col. to William & Caroline.'

CHAPTER XXXIV

IN WHICH MRS. ADAMS FEELS MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE RISING GENERATION

AGAIN poor Abby, under the burden of pain and pioneer problems, has been unable to write even to her mother. Mrs. Adams writes continuously, this time to give an alarming picture of contemporaneous medical treatment undergone by Aunt Cranch, as well as some timely suggestions for family reading. There are indications, too, of a leaning toward the, as yet, unheralded doctrines of birth control, even as in the early days of her marriage she proclaimed feminism.

'QUINCY August 29 1808

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER

'Do you know how long a time has elapsed since you wrote a single line to your Mother? You did not use to be thus neglectful of your pen. Caroline has written once to me, and once to Susan, so that my mind has been relieved from the apprehension that you were sick. I have had an ill turn, and been confined to my chamber for a week past — but your Aunt Cranch has been much more sick than I have with a *Virtigo* in her head. She has taken an emetic & been Blistered, but is not yet relieved. Mrs. Greenleaf [Lucy Cranch] is there, fortunately, although encumbered with 5 children, and near being confined with her sixth. Yet why should I say encumbered; doth not the Scripture say, that children are an *Heritage of the Lord*? "He who says that it is good for man to live alone gives the lie to his Maker, and dishonours his parents," says good Dr. Hunter in his sacred *Biography of the Patriarchs*, a course of lectures — excellent family Books. I should be delighted to have my Caroline read them. She must read uncle Justise [a confirmed bachelor, Uncle 'Justise'] this admonition. Although seperated from you as appears to me a much greater distance than when you resided in the city of New York, my imagination follows you, I think of you hourly, regret the seperation, and mourn that my only daughter cannot more frequently visit her parents. Yet I check myself,

myself, and say, am I not ungratefull? Has she not been with me through many of my most dangerous and painfull sicknesses, a solace and consolation. Might she not be placed in circumstances much more distressing for me to reflect upon?

‘How is my dear William, laid aside his pen for the impliments of Husbandery? Can the wilderness make him forget the social fireside of Quincy, the slate and pencil of his Grandfather over which he last winter spent so many — shall I say *pleasant*, or usefull evenings? From John we hear pretty often. He writes for information and instruction, which his Grandfather readily communicates. I expect Susan’s Mamma & Sister every day to spend some time with me. She seems to be unfortunate in her expected connexion, and saucy Susan says, sighs as much as if she was a Young Girl — for the Slut’ (Portia, uncensored, sometimes employed Elizabethan English) ‘got her Letters to me and read them. You know she is too knowing in some things for her years. Caroline says to Susan, write me anything but politickes. If you say so too, I shall hardly know how to comply. Yet they are very vexatious topickes.

‘With respect to the Letter of J. Q. A. so much the subject of federal censure and abuse, there is everything in it, which constitutes an upright, honest candid Man, who loves his country better than Gold. I consider it as a family trophy, as a coat of arms, and pride myself more in being the Mother of such a son than in all the honours and titles which Monarch could bestow.

‘It has been publicly asserted that your Father has said that he fully approved of the present Administration. Nothing could be more false. He must first condemn all the great leading principles of his own, which were neither weake or timid, rash or violent, cruel or vindictive. They were the Halcyon Days of America. What is to be our future Lot, Heaven only knows. May the righteous few’ (we can guess the names of two of them) ‘save our Land.

‘Remember me affectionately to the Colonel, to William and Caroline. I hope Mrs. St Hillaire has recovered from her fall. For a sprain when first done, a Teakettle of cold water poured upon it in a stream is the best thing. Though painful it is salutary.’

The next letter is interesting because of its spontaneous tribute

ute to the Colonel, and for the endearing glimpse of the good New England lady's worldliness. European and Republican courts had left Mrs. Adams 'by no means insensible of' the value of manner as well as manners.

Already guests were welcome in that simple home in the wilderness. The Colonel was a man of inextinguishable hospitality.

'MY DEAR CAROLINE:

'Your apology for not having written before was accepted by your grandmother. To be attentive to our guests is not only true kindness, but true politeness; for if there is a virtue which is its own reward, hospitality is that virtue. We remember slight attentions, after we have forgotten great benefits; sweetness of temper and easiness of behaviour are peculiarly engaging in youth, and when found in age, adorn life's decline. But why need I recommend these virtues to my dear girl, when she has one of the first patterns for her imitation before her in her father, whose cordial hospitality, and true politeness are known to all who have any knowledge of him, either in the camp, the city, or the wilderness? Were it not for this, and the excellent example you have before you for prudence, moderation, and discretion, in another character, I should fear you would become rusticated, and lose that polish, which is of some value in the polite world, and without which, I have known many a talent hidden under a bushel, instead of shedding a lustre all around.

'A. A.'

'Only a part of this letter is given,' Caroline informs us in a conscientious footnote. We suspect the decorous suppression of names of conspicuous examples of the lusterless whose identities are long since lost in oblivion. Mrs. Adams next describes an appalling number of 'seizures' in the Cranch household.

'QUINCY October 3d 1808

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER

'I began a letter to you on Sunday last in which I informed you that your sister Sally Adams and Abbe arrived here the week

week before. John has written me a Letter by them which is the first I have received from him, tho he frequently writes to his Grandfather. Susan has been a month at Atkinson, and Abbe Shaw' (another Abigail) 'with me untill last week when her Aunt Cranch sent for her. It is more than a month since my dear sister was seized with a violent vertigo. . . . Mr. Cranch was suddenly seized with a cholera morbus which in a few hours, reduced him to a state little better than Death. The next calamity was Martha the old faithful Domestic, who was seized with a Lung fever, and confined to her Bed. All these things contributed to keep your Aunt low' (as well they might). 'Bleeding and Baths were the only relief she found. Thus much for the dismall.

'I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of August 23rd which you had delayd because you had not anything worth communicating. To know that you are well, that you have Bread to eat, and Raiment to cloath you, are subjects of no trivial import. Your account of the plentiful Harvest you have gathered in leaves no anxiety respecting want. . . . It is true we have not always power over our lot, to carve it out as we please, but the mind has power over itself, and happiness has its seat in the mind, not in external circumstances.' A good mental scientist, John Adams's Abigail!

'Our dear Caroline's chit-chat Letters amuse and divert us, so lively, so gay, like the Bird which hops from spray to spray and carols as he sits, imparting pleasure to all who hear. . . . Your Brother [John] Sister and children are well, meaning Charles [Francis]. John has been at Quincy with me all summer; George grown to be a steady Boy, goes to school regularly.'

Alas, poor George did not continue a steady boy! Good Grandmother Adams, benignantly describing them, did not foresee that George and John were to become rivals for the hand of their beautiful cousin Mary Helen; that John was to be the one to capture her, despite the fact that he was an arrogant and rather unpopular young man who had his nose pulled by another rude young man in the capitol; while poor George, who annoyed his father by preferring the law to literary 'pursuits,' was to become bibulous and end his days by toppling off the Benjamin Franklin

Franklin traveling by water from New York to Boston while in this lamentable condition.

We hear of George in an exemplary mood in a letter to Thomas's wife: 'George wants his English reader. Write me by Hobart the milk man by whom I send this.'

'Hobart, the milk man,' we may presume had also tucked away among his milk cans the pounds of philosophy, religion, *post mortem* verdicts on history that made up Pappa's correspondence with Mr. Jefferson, which was now in full swing.

Mrs. Adams cannot long keep away from 'politicks, that Vexatious Topicke': 'Last week the report was current that Napoleon had declared war against the United States.' She tells Abby. 'This was not believed by your Father, who could not see any cause or motive of policy in the measure. . . . Mr. Madison, I think, will be our next president. Pinckney is not the man calculated to ride the Storm and stem the torrent. The people are so divided that it is like a House which cannot stand. I was in Boston last week. Poor Aunt Edwards fell in her chamber and broke her Arm, regrets it much as she was to have made her annual visit at Quincy on the same week.' It was inopportune.

And Caroline had made an enviable impression upon Quincy: 'So womanly, so correct, so pleasing in her manners, that those who came after her when weighed in balance were found wanting. Susan is in a violent hurry to take the Letter to her uncle's. Wait, I say, untill I send my regards to all the family uncles Aunts and cousins, and to my dear Daughter the affection of her Mother.'

'I hope with you that you may return to the Society of your Friends and connections,' Mrs. Adams writes another day, 'yet I trust that there are pleasures and comforts to be found there to a mind disposed to view objects in their best light. Johnson in his *Rasselas* shows us that the happy valley must be in the mind. I have just procured *Corinna* and am reading it. I will give you my opinion when I have finished it. If William should think of passing the winter at Philadelphia, I should recommend him to an acquaintance with Dr. Rush's family. Michael Rush is a very fine young man, and he will find a kind of home in the domestick circle of the Dr. His uncle Thomas will give him Letters to some of his Friends. Mrs. Samuel Adams thinks he
may

may be of *essential* service to his Aunt in the care of her affairs, particularly if she removes to her Farm as she proposes to do. A single woman, whether maiden or widow, wants some Friend of the other sex to protect her and her property as she becomes the prey of every Sharper. William has seen enough of the world to be a guide to a thoughtless giddy woman' (this was Aunt Nancy). 'He is quick sighted, and will easily discern what is proper; at the same time he will be upon his guard against the contagion of improper example. I have reasons for these hints.'

And Aunt Cranch has recovered sufficiently to consume her Thanksgiving dinner. 'They all kept thanksgiving with us, your uncle and Aunt Cranch & Sister Smith. We called you all to mind, and found our party incomplete. Last year you were with us.' And Susan feels constrained to apologize to her Aunt Smith for some philandering at Atkinson. 'Susan desires me to present her duty to you, and to say to you that she was at Atkinson when her Mother arrived here, and did not know it for a week, when be sure she was anxious enough to return, but was obliged to wait another week for her Aunt Peabody.' (Aunt Shaw that was.) 'All our domesticks remember you and yours with Love and affection. I expect Aunt Edwards tomorrow to make her Annual visit. I expected she would give up the Idea, but she sent me word her Arm was well, and she must come and kiss the President.' It was the day of grand old women.

In the mirror of the mother's answer we can construct Abby's letter. Ill, stranded on the outskirts of civilization, she sees her son growing older without opportunity in life; her brilliant husband cut off from the world in which he had shone, and feels forgotten, feels perhaps that her father, an ex-President, her brother, an influential statesman, might do more than they have done.

'QUINCY December 8th 1808

'MY DEAR DAUGHTER

'I am always rejoiced to see your handwriting, altho the contents of your Letters sometimes give me pain, and none more so than those which contain an Idea that your Relatives and Friends have not exerted themselves for you as they might have done. With respect to William, your Father himself went to
Town

Town and advised with some of his commercial acquaintance, who owing to the total suppression of commerce did not like to take any young Gentleman into their stores. Most of those who had any Number were obliged to dismiss them. Dr. Welch's youngest son John returned home, and he sent him to an academy to keep him out of Idleness. Mr. Greenleaf's son Price is returned home. Capt. Beals two sons are here entirely out of Business. The shop keepers have business for a time, but that is like to come to a close by the non intercourse Bill which has recently past in congress. So that the youth of our country have not any other resource but to till the land for Bread to eat. This state of things cannot last long. We are wrought up to a crisis which must break forth in vengeance some where or other. Parson Sockly' (evidently not a Jefferson fan) 'told his congregation that we were suffering the judgments of Heaven for having chosen an infidel president to rule over us.

'I am much grieved at the misfortune of your brother [Justus]. A more generous benevolent heart exists not in Man. I hope he will be spared to his family and Friends. Our old Friend Gen'll Warren is also numberd with the great congregation. I felt as tho former Friendship demanded of me a sympathizing Letter, and regretted that the bitterness of party spirit had severed us; but after the injustice she has done your Father's Character in her History, and the opportunity he had given her of making some acknowledgement for it, which she wholly omitted to do, I thought a Letter of the kind would appear insincere; and although I feel for her bereavement, I have declined writing to her.'

This refers to the unsatisfactory portrait of Mr. Adams in Mrs. Warren's 'History of the Revolution.' But, Mrs. Ellet tells us, 'it was amicably settled, and as a token of reconcilliation Mrs. Adams sent her friend a ring containing her own and her husband's hair.' A suggestion for those in search of a suitable peace offering.

Mrs. Adams's next indicates a misgiving as to her ability to cope with the rising generation: 'What is the reason I do not get a Letter from my Mother I think I hear you say? Why I will tell you, Child, I have sat down more than once, got through one page, been interrupted, laid it by, untill it seemd of no value.

value. I love to be by myself when I write, and that is a difficult thing in the winter season. The parlour your Father occupies all the forenoon in reading or writing. It is proper he should have it to himself. My own chamber is compleatly full this winter, so that I can only snatch a few moments at a time, and then with various interruptions. Since I began these few lines I have been twice call'd away. Susan and Abbe are gone to Boston in order to go to the play in the evening. Louissa has been there this week. Little Abbe is sick, and Eliza' (of the large chestnut eye) 'is confin'd to the chamber, so that I am more still than usual. Mrs. Charles Adams has been writing in my chamber to Norfolk, from whence she had a Letter yesterday. A correspondence is kept up, but whether any connection will ever take place is uncertain. I wish she was well satisfied in Life, but without good prospects, she is better as she is. Susan and Abbe are two overgrown girls, Susan * with all her foibles bids fair to make a valuable woman. . . . As yet they have not attain'd to many of the graces, particularly Abbe, who I really think an uncouth child in her behaviour. She is milder in her temper, and less usurping than Susan but not half the intellect. I begin to think Grandparents not so well qualified to educate Grandchildren as parents. They are apt to relax in their spirit of government, and to be too indulgent. Yet that was not the case with my Grandmother, whose memory I cherish with holy veneration.'

And even more disturbing than the rising generation, a scarcity of cider. Cider was a very serious subject. 'With Surprise and Grief I find that the Use of Cyder is become Unfashionable at Colledge,' Mr. Adams wrote to Benjamin Waterhouse about this time. It was not 'Unfashionable' in the Adams family. 'We have

* It is gratifying to know that the dynamic Susan, who alternately infuriated and fascinated her grandmother, grew up to be a 'valuable,' as well as an attractive woman, the joy and prop of her grandfather's last years. Susan's first husband was a naval officer named Clarke, who fell in love with her at sight at a ball in Boston; her second, William Treadway, a Virginian, who settled in Utica. Thus the sisters were not parted, for Abby, the 'less usurping,' married Alexander Bryan Johnson, of that city, a philosophical banker whose works were widely read in the mid-nineteenth century. Mr. Johnson must have been an irresistible person, though no Adonis, for he married three beautiful and distinguished women. After Abby Adams's death he married a daughter of Judge Master's — that impetuous Judge Masters who fell in love with Abby's Aunt Nancy on a stage-coach journey and proposed to her before they were parted. Those were the days of High Romance!

have been sadly cut off with our cyder,' Mrs. Adams records. 'We made only 4 barreles this year, and have scarcely a Bushel of winter apples. I sent on a letter from Harriot Welch to you. I intended to have covered it, but your Father saw it and franked it. I shall not touch upon politicks now, but reserve them for the subject of another Letter.'

CHAPTER XXXV

WILLIAM STEUBEN SAYS A LONG FAREWELL

A LETTER from Mrs. Adams, written in March, 1809, shows that she had no intimation of her daughter's condition. 'Your two last letters, gave me great pleasure, not only from learning by them that you enjoyed good health, but your spirits were more animated from your little excursions from home, and from your prospects with respect to your family. I most sincerely rejoice in any event which looks like prosperity.'

But by May Mrs. Adams has become anxious again: 'I have not had a line from you for several weeks, Your father visits the post-office every post day; and, although he frequently returns with his pockets full of letters, I do not find among them the superscription which is dearer to me than all the rest. When I sit down to write, I feel as though I could not pen a paragraph worth penning. My fire is out, my wit decayed, my fancy sunk. I long to imbibe a draught of that enthusiasm which is the wine of life: It is, to use the expression of the Letters from the Mountains, "the fan in summer and the fur in winter." Pray have you met with these Letters? If you have not, I will certainly send them to you; they are written by a Mrs. Grant; her father was a British officer who was stationed in some fort beyond Albany upon the frontiers, for she speaks of her Mohawk friends. She says that Madam Schuyler, seeing her one day reading Milton's Paradise Lost with delighted attention, appeared astonished to see a child take pleasure in such a book. She adds, "whatever culture my mind has received I owe to her. . . . I should have become almost savage in a retreat which precluded me from the advantages of society as well as those of education." Though secluded from the gay world, she appears well acquainted with life and manners. . . . These letters contain so much matter adapted to your situation and retirement, that when you read them you will call her sister-spirit. . . . They made me for a time forget that the roses had fled from my cheeks, the lustre departed from my eyes, or that I was

'Like a meagre mope a dust and thin
In a loose nightgown of my own wan skin.'

I long to communicate to you this feast of reason, and this flow of soul. Mrs. Smith will share it with you. . . . This letter has lain unfinished for several days. . . . All this time I have waited impatient to hear from you, and learn

‘How springs the tender plant,
How nature paints her colors!’

or whether stern Boreas still usurps the domain of Vertumnus and banishes Flora from her rightful abode. To descend to plain prose, how is the season with you? (Girls, be silent!) you would wonder how I can write a line, surrounded and interrupted twenty times within this hour.

‘Here comes little John [John Quincy’s John] “Grandmamma, I have lost my fourpence in the grass, now I cannot buy me a sword; won’t you give me another?” “Hush, child; don’t you see I am writing?” Then in runs Elizabeth, holding up her little arms for me to take her. Away with you all, or I will lock the door.

‘I heard of our dear Caroline last week. I know you deprive yourself of much enjoyment in parting with her; yet I think you did right. A total seclusion from that society, which at her age is desirable, might in time injure her. Although she has so much life and such a flow of spirits.’

The ‘General’ Eaton referred to in Mrs. Adams’s next letter is that adventurous spirit who thought to be a pasha-maker in Tripoli, and paid the penalty for seeing a little farther than his naval and consular colleagues, Commodore Barron and Mr. Lear. Abby has reason to be interested in this incident. A few days before Mr. Adams had heard from William Cunningham about ‘a person yclept Eaton who affects to be in every secret,’ who, in a speech at a meeting of the Town of Brimfield has very confidently asserted the cause of Pickering’s dismissal to have been his ‘opposition to your nomination of Col. Smith for a General Officer.’

Mr. Adams’s reply does not mince matters nor exhibit undue hesitation about placing his finger on the spot. That was *not* the reason for his ‘dismissal’ of his Secretary of State, but, ‘It is true that Pickering, *at the instigation of Hamilton, I suppose, who was jealous of Smith as a favorite of Washington and a better officer than*

than himself, excited a faction in the Senate against him, and to my knowledge propagated many scandalous falsehoods about him, and got him negatived though Washington had recommended him.'

Mr. Adams believed — indeed one may say, proved — that both Pickering and Hamilton¹ were disloyal to Washington. He also points out one who was not. 'I never knew a more sincere friend to Washington than Billy Smith,' he observes in a startlingly informal moment to Dr. Rush.

Mrs. Adams's letter exults over Mr. Madison's election, and perhaps even more over Mr. Jefferson's departure. Like her husband she had scant regard for Eatons and Mirandas.

'Yesterday your father brought me the much-desired packet. You mention General Eaton's town-meeting speech, which I had seen. I presume he was in *spirits* when he made it; his virulence against Mr. — [probably Aaron Burr] is really personal; thereby hangs a tale. Mr. Lear, you know, made a treaty with Tripoli, which, through the misrepresentation of Eaton and his intrigues, had like to have been rejected by the Senate. Eaton also made, as he thought, very inadmissible demands of money, which Mr. — opposed, though in this he was not successful. All this was enough to make Eaton his enemy. Eaton is a bold, daring adventurer, with considerable talents, but without judgment, prudence, or discretion; His story of a mission to Constantinople is all a vision of his own imagination. . . . I dare not trust myself with describing to you how much I want to see you. . . . I am writing by candle-light, whilst all around me are fast bound in sleep. My eyes suffer, but there is a tranquility around me that the busy cares of the day interrupt; even faithful Juno lies snoring beside me. The clock strikes 12, and I must retire to rest, or suffer on the morrow.'

Mrs. Adams did not foresee Posterity's interest in her letters: 'You alarm me when you tell me that you have preserved my letters. Your affection and your partiality to your mother, stamp a value upon them which can never be felt by those less interested.

¹ January 25th, 1806, Mr. Adams had written to Dr. Rush: 'Hamilton had fixed his eye on the highest station in America, and hated every Man, young or old, who stood in his way, or could in any manner eclipse his laurels or rival his Pretensions. Col. Smith, Coll. Burr, Mr. Jay, Mr. Madison, Mr. Adams, Mr. Jefferson and Washington were but a part of those who were envied by him.'

interested. They are written without regard to style, and scarcely ever copying a letter, they must be very incorrect productions, and quite unworthy preservation or perpetuity, do not let them out-live you; you may select a few, perhaps, worth transmitting, but in general, I fear, they are trash. . . . I enclose your father's letter upon the King of England's proclamation, first published in the Boston Patriot. His text, as he calls it, is a quotation from Col. Pickering's letter, to which your brother replied, and which cost him his seat in the Senate.' (Timothy Pickering kept at it as long as the Smith and Adams family were above ground!) ' . . . Whatever predilection Mr. Jefferson had in favor of France, or has against Great Britain, I believe, in his public transactions, he strove to act with impartial justice towards both.' (It is easier to be just to Mr. Jefferson now that he has had to step down from that presidential chair.) 'I wish I could justify all Mr. Jefferson's measures with the same candor; but to his own Master, he must stand or fall.'

In 1809, young William Steuben Smith went to Russia as the secretary of his Uncle John Quincy Adams, who was appointed American Minister to that country by Madison. John Quincy's boys were destined to become familiar with courts, but after their first meeting with royalty they decided that court manners compared quite unfavorably with those of Aunt Smith and Grandmother Adams.

After the ship had carried them all away, Mrs. Adams, who felt that she might never see her son again, sat down to pour out her heart to Caroline: 'This separation from a dear son, at the advanced age of your grandfather and myself, was like taking our last leave of him. . . . Our hearts were garnered up in him, perhaps too closely, and we were called to this trial to wean us from too strong an attachment to this earth.'

But Mrs. Adams was to see John Quincy again, it was young William Steuben who had looked his last upon his mother. 'I could sustain the separation with more fortitude if one equally dear to me was not also far from me; though not in a foreign land, yet so distant that I am cut off from all personal intercourse. That I can hear frequently from her is a comfort and consolation.'

The next letter was to that 'one equally dear': 'You, too, have
your

your anxieties for a beloved and deserving son; you may live to see him return, but to me, the separation appeared like the last farewell. "God from all creatures hides the book of fate." And unto that Being, who has heretofore protected me and mine upon the mighty waters, and in foreign climes, I again commit those most dear to us, yet I must be insensible if I did not know that what I relinquish is no common loss. . . . I attended his farewell lecture at Cambridge; the chapel was crowded, every aisle and avenue. I must copy for you a passage, which was felt like an electrical shock. I saw the effect upon the whole audience: . . .'

But we will omit that 'passage' of several pages. We cannot quite share Mrs. Adams's veneration for the ponderous metaphor, the punctuated parenthetical paragraph of her distinguished son. We of to-day would choose rather to read his mother, his father, or that light-hearted, but not light-thinking, brother-in-law whose letters doubtless seemed everything that was offhand and informal to the taste of a John Quincy Adams.

In her next Mrs. Adams gives Caroline the benefit of some Thanksgiving reflections: 'At dinner I looked round, I hope with a thankful heart, but alas! how many of my dear children were absent; the young shoots and branches remained; I had two from each family; these promising successors of their dear parents rejoiced over their plum-puddings without knowing the anxious solicitude of their grandmother respecting some of their absent parents. . . . I am rejoiced that you intend to turn your spinning wheel. From the present temper of Old England, it looks as if we should be less her customers than formerly. We had better return to the pastoral age, than suffer the domination of any foreign power. It is said,' continues Mrs. Adams, repeating old gossip, 'that the Emperor Augustus wore no clothes but such as were made by the Empress and her daughters; and Olympia did the same for Alexander. The web of Penelope is well known to you, as related by Homer. Thus, my dear girl, you have before you some of the most ancient, illustrious examples. Your mother accuses me of a neglect in her education upon this head.'

In April, 1810, Abigail Smith was still well enough, or courageous enough, to make an occasional visit: 'We stand in need
of

of some variety to keep body and mind in tune,' her mother responds happily, unaware of the truth.

'I feel grateful for having it thus in my power to hold converse with you, my dear and beloved daughter, separated as we are by circumstances which we cannot control. But my mind is sometimes prone to rebel and rise indignant against those who have been the cause of our painful separation.' Mrs. Adams, of course, blamed Miranda as well as Jefferson. 'Your father enjoys his health, but not without an increase of that tremor upon his hands which makes it difficult for him to hold a knife or take a cup of tea. His spirits are good, and he amuses himself with the little flock of grandchildren who are, one or the other, always with us.' And she adds with affectionate remembrance of happier days: 'Give my love to Col. Smith; tell him it would do me good to see him. Has he as fine spirits as formerly?'

CHAPTER XXXVI

MRS. ADAMS RECEIVES A VISIT FROM HER DAUGHTER SMITH

ABBY had concealed her condition from her parents, but the time had come when the Colonel insisted upon her having the best medical advice procurable. This, Mr. Adams naturally felt to be in Boston, where she could live comfortably in her father's house during consultation and treatment.

In the winter of 1810, Mrs. Adams writes to Caroline about the projected journey: 'Your letters, my dear Caroline . . . enliven the spirits. I take them as cordial which, during the residence of the bald-pated winter and a close confinement to my chamber for several weeks, I have been much in need of . . . I do not know that I ever gave you encouragement to expect me at the Valley, but I look forward to seeing you here as an attendant upon your mother as soon as the spring opens and the roads will permit.'

But the spring passed and Abby was not able to make the journey. A letter from her father to Dr. Rush in June shows that they have discovered the truth: 'We are in great anxiety for her as she is threatened with a cancer in her breast. We expect her here in a few weeks. Her second son John is at Hamilton about four miles from his father and mother in the practice of law, and they have made him a Postmaster and a Master in Chancery.'

In July, accompanied by Caroline and the young Master in Chancery and bearing an anxious letter from the poor Colonel, who dared not leave in harvest time, Abby took the long journey to Quincy. In her joy at the reunion Mrs. Adams seems to have lost her realization of the gravity of the situation. She neglected, too, to send back word by John to the lonely Colonel, but soon makes explanations and amends in one of her ample letters.

'QUINCY July 23 1811

'DEAR SIR

'I hope you will not impute my not writing to you by your son to want of attention to you, or a proper sensibility to your request

request contained in your letter to me. The extreme Heat of the weather, and my joy at the arrival of a dear and only daughter after an absence of three years and a half, really disqualified me for my pen, and John's stay was so limited that I could not say by him what I wished, as I had not then seen the Doctor myself. Since then I have conversed upon the subject. His opinion is that no outward application should be made and that Mrs. Smith's general state of health is so good as not to threaten any present danger. He does not pronounce it to be of the nature we feared, though he cannot say but what it may terminate in one, and he further says, that it may remain in its present state many years unless improper application should be made. He advised the use of Hemlocke pills.

'Mrs. Smith and Caroline sustained the heat of the weather and the fatigue of the journey with much vigor. The Idea of distance was greatly diminished since I find that one week can bring us together.' And John has sent back a lively letter. 'A Rogue, he frightened us all, by his list of untoward accidents which he never experienced.

'I had begun to think before his Mother got through his Letter, that the whole sum of the Miseries of human Life had befallen him — when behold it was a vision of the Night. I consider it a very fortunate circumstance that your Mother and Sister are with you to supply the place, and in some measure compensate for the absence of your best Friend and your dear daughter, who I find no way altered but in her more womanly appearance and deportment. Her tender, attentive and affectionate behaviour endears her to every one.

'I hope you will not be impatient for their return, but spair them to us as long as you can.'

The next sentence reads strangely, knowing at whose door the Dark Friend was to call first. 'You may live many years to rejoice in them, neither the Father or Mother can expect to remain much longer; but I will enjoy the present.'

Poor Colonel, he had written, as always, a cheery letter telling how Nancy and his mother had tried to simulate New York grandeurs in the wilderness: 'Your domestic Naration amused us much. I could see the zeal of your Mother, and the anxiety of Nancy to make everything correspond with ancient establishments.

ments. Present my kind and affectionate remembrances to them. We wish you would make it convenient to visit us when ever Mrs. Smith returns; a journey and the sea air may benefit her Health. The President'—for so the devoted Abigail referred to her husband long after that glory was past—'desires to be remembered to you and yours. We all unite in Love and affection to the whole Family of whom we talk daily.

'I am Dear Sir

'Yours in Love and Friendship

'ABIGAIL ADAMS'

Yet despite brave words it must have been desolate enough for the Colonel in that little stone house beyond the outskirts of the world he had known, with always underneath the gnawing pain of self-reproach in his tender heart. Even the promise of better fortune could only have seemed a mockery in that bitter hour—for it was on the way. He had made strong friends in that strange place, men eager to see him in the high places once more, and very soon their efforts were to be crowned with success.

Caroline did not leave her father long to the ministrations of Nancy and his mother. A month later her Grandmother Adams is addressing her at the Valley: 'We talk daily of you, and wish for you, and when I think how far you all are from me, I am ready to sit down and weep. . . . We go on much in the old way here, now and then a large party, then a few friends.'

Poor little American Beauty, a fading rose! Did it bring comfort or an added pang, those last friendly handclasps toward the end of her earthly journey? Mrs. Adams writes again to the lonely man in the Valley. The Colonel, an extremist to the last, is ready to throw away everything—the hard-conquered acres, the promised honors at Washington, all that reinstatement meant to him, to be with his stricken Friend. He must have written rather a wild letter, fearing that in these last hard years he has worn out her affection, but her mother reassures him: 'No, like Ruth of old, whither thou goest she will go.' Nor is he for one moment to be allowed to 'sacrifice his prospects.' Mrs. Adams's letter is of the sort that warm-hearted, yet by no means effusive woman wrote to those she loved. It is signed, 'Your affectionate mother,' the only one I have found so signed to any one

one but her own children, fond though she was of her sons' wives. In a day when parents frequently addressed their own adult children and grandchildren as 'Sir' and 'Madam,' this intimate signature meant much.

'Your Letter of August 12th I received in the absence of Mrs. Smith, who was upon a visit to Mrs. Guild, and therefore I could not communicate it to her. She past several days in Boston at Dr. Welch's, and as I had requested, Dr. Warren was consulted in conjunction. Their opinion was similar to Dr. Holbrook's, who is a skillful physician and practices in our Family. Dr. Tufts alone varies in some measure from them. He is at a loss as to its nature. Would it not be best, having advised with Surgeons and physicians, to follow their advise? She is not taking even the hemlocke pills. A Lady of my acquaintance laboured under a similar Tumour and was advised to have it removed, but upon a consultation with a Gentleman of the profession, he prevailed upon her to defer it for a time. She did so, and lived to the Age of 82, without any further trouble from it. . . .

'Your proposition to remove near to us, would of all things be most agreeable to me, but I would not require such a sacrifice as you must make to gratify my desire of having my Dear Daughter near to me. It would give me more pain than it could possibly add to my pleasure to know that you must sacrifice your present prospects and comforts, — and however gratefull I feel for the offer, and the more generous I consider it in you, the more loth I am to accede to it.

'No, like Ruth of old, whither thou goest, she will go, and where thou abidest she will abide.'

But nothing in life or death can withhold Mrs. Adams's pen from the 'Vexatious Topicke,' several closely written pages of which intervene. 'I presume Mrs. Smith has written to you that we have Letters up to the 18th of May from Mr. Adams, [John Quincy] when they were all well, but he had not received any Letters from America for six months, the Baltick was not clear of Ice so that vessels could get up. Please to make my best Regards to your Worthy Mother and Sister.

'I am Dear Sir with Sentiments
'of Love and affection

'Your Mother A. Adams'

A month later she writes again:

'I yesterday received your Letter, and at the same time, the president received the one enclosed from Dr. Rush which I think it my Duty, altho a distressing and painfull one, to communicate to you by the earliest opportunity.

'You will see by the Letter that Mrs. Smith wrote her case to Dr. Rush, which her Father inclosed with a request that he would give his candid opinion. Mrs. Smith was induced to write to the Doctor from having read in his Medical Works a treatise upon this subject.* If the operation is necessary as the Dr states it to be, and I fear it is, the sooner it is done the better, provided Mrs. Smith can bring her mind, as I hope she will, to consent to it. Dr. Warren of Boston is considered the first Surgeon there and has performed the greatest operations. I hope Mrs. Smith will write her mind to you, and if she consents, that you will be with her. I pray Heaven to support her and her Friends, through the painfull tryal. . . . We think Mrs. Charles Adams better. Mrs. Smith will write by the next post. She must take time to weigh well what her Duty is.'

Apparently poor Abigail did not at once 'bring her mind' to face the agonies and doubtful results of the painful surgery of over a century ago, but eventually she did.

October 13, 1811, Mr. Adams wrote to Dr. Rush: 'After a reasonable time for Deliberation and Reflection the Heroine determined. . . . On Tuesday the 8th of October, a day memorable in my little Annals, the operation was performed in the Presence of the two Dr. Warrens, Dr. Welch and Dr. Holbrook by Dr Warren Senior. . . . The Surgeons all agree that in no instance did they ever witness a Patient of more Intrepidity than she exhibited through the whole transaction' — which is to say that this heroic woman was *conscious* under the Surgeon's knife for twenty-five minutes, and the subsequent hour of dressing the wound.

On New Year's Day, 1812, John Adams wrote to Jefferson: 'My daughter Smith has gone through a dangerous operation
which

* 'She accidentally, as the world says, read your book,' Mr. Adams wrote to Dr. Rush, admitting a mystical belief in the 'Special Providence.' 'Had not your letter overcome all her Scruples I believe she would have returned before now to Smith's Valley.'

which detains her here this winter from her husband and family at Chenango, where one of the most gallant and skilfull officers of our revolution is probably destined to spend the rest of his days not in the field of glory, but in the hard labor of husbandry.' John Adams must have felt that Jefferson deserved that thrust.

Abby, necessarily, remained with her parents in Quincy during the period of consultation, operation, and apparent convalescence. Sometime during that year she met Royall and Mary Palmer — her first meeting with her early love since the day she sailed away to forget him. The tears came to poor Abby's eyes and she could not speak. Grandmother Tyler was thereupon convinced that she had been unhappy with the Colonel and cherished a lifelong regret for Royall.

But it was not the loss of Royall that stabbed poor Abby's heart. She feared that she was dying and she did not want to die. She was not old yet, only forty-seven. There were prospects for her Friend at Washington; but for the relentless oncoming death within, they might have wiped out the cruel years of downfall and struggle, might once more have known serene happiness together. Brought unexpectedly face to face with the lover of her youth, she must have had a sharp and sudden vision of the beginning and the end of the path — surely cause enough for tears. Or perhaps seeing the devoted Mary and Royall together, she felt suddenly alone and homesick for her Friend, still the slave of those hard-conquered acres.

Yet life, comforting, commonplace, went on. February 3d, Mr. Adams writes of 'sitting at the fireside with my daughter Smith,' when a servant brings in a bundle of letters, including a long one from Mr. Jefferson, which they 'discuss' together. In those last long days of her life, as she sat by the dear familiar fireside writing to Mr. Jefferson for her father, did Abby forget, even if she forgave, what Jefferson, unstable as water, had done to her Friend?

For fifteen years that correspondence raged — so voluminous that a rumor went about that some mysterious secret of state was involved. No one knew what it really was but the two old men themselves and the two Abigails who served as John Adams's amanuenses — the young one slowly dying, yet dutifully glad to cover page after page of foolscap for her father.

After

After her return to the Valley — and her entrance into that darker Valley — the elder Abigail, his unfailing one, wrote for him; later still, Charles's daughter, Susan, the usurping yet valuable — 'My Females,' Mr. Adams called them. Paul Willstach's delightful book contains the gist of that correspondence, covering most of this world and the life to come.

One of the Colonel's letters to his wife, written when he still had hopes of her recovery, is full of his fine tenderness for Thomas Adams and his young wife in their affliction. There is, too, evidence of an invigorating correspondence on National affairs with his mother-in-law.

LEBANON, *March 29, 1812*

MY DEAR:

'I received your letter of the 6th instant, and mourn most sincerely with you for the loss your brother and sister have met with in the death of their amiable child. You wonder why it was sent to entwine itself around your hearts, and then to be thus snatched away; it is amongst the mysterious ways of Providence. . . .

'This stroke must fall very heavily upon your sister, who always appeared full of sweet, charming sensibilities towards her children, and brings to my recollection a few lines of Watts:

"Children, these dear young limbs, these little other selves, how they dilate the heart to wider dimensions, and soften every fibre, to increase the mother's sad capacity of pain."

'I would request you to present my sincere condolence to your brother and sister.

'I am apprehensive your good mother is surfeited by the length of my letter in answer to her interrogatories; but I still think there has been too much talk of war. I recollect a speech of a member in the British House of Commons in opposition to immediate war measures, not inapplicable to our Congressional talk. He said: "It is very easy, Mr. Speaker, to talk big, and considering the spirit of resentment that has been industriously stirred up in the nation, I know it would be mighty popular to come to vigorous resolutions immediately, but I do not know if it would be mighty wise."

'I am sure it would not be wise, as long as there are any hopes
of

of obtaining redress by peaceable means; and even when we come to an end of all our hopes in this way, we ought not to begin to talk till we are ready to act. Threatening speeches, or even threatening resolutions, are but words. They are *vox et preterea nihil*; and therefore the less they are made use of the better; but if any such are made use of, they ought to be instantly followed with suitable actions; for if they are not, those who have injured us will despise our menaces, and the whole world will laugh at our folly.

‘They all join in love and affection to you, with

‘Yours, affectionately,

‘W. S. SMITH.’

One feels in this, as in so many of the Smith-Adams letters, that between these men and women who habitually put patriotic rather than individual claims first, the affairs of their country remained a burning interest even in the midst of desperate private sorrows. Like her mother, Abby was a woman with whom National situations were discussed, whose opinion was valued; a less usual condition then than now. She who as a young girl was trusted with state secrets, to whom Jefferson wrote in cipher, covering in his letters to her information the betrayal of which would have meant disaster, was not only a lovable and charming woman, she was a comrade.

In August, 1812, the Colonel took Abby home. The war had begun by that time and the Colonel, ardent patriot, brave and skillful officer, longed to go.

‘Col. Smith left us yesterday with his Wife and Daughter,’ Mr. Adams writes to Dr. Rush. ‘After a year with us she has returned in good health. The Veteran dwells on the Scenes of War with as much animation as Uncle Toby, and is as ardent to engage again.’ How John Adams’s warm heart ached for his son-in-law we know from these letters to Dr. Rush. ‘In total Retirement, in Agricultural Labour and incessant reading his time is spent. His heart bleeds for his country and burns to serve it. To you I will say in secret, what is Hull, what is Eustis, what is Armstrong, what is Dearborne, as Soldiers or Officers to him? He is as sensible of the Justice and Necessity of this War as you and I are, and more sensible of the improvident

dent and unskillfull conduct of it. I have no hope that he will be employed, but it is to be regretted that such Talents, such Tacticks, such discipline and such experience should perish and be lost. He was not a sagacious Politician. He has been led astray into error by Chancellor Livingston, by Burr, and by Miranda. But who has not? He absolutely refused to have any concern in Burr's Waschita Project, and protested against it. . . . This man and Brooks & are neglected and who and what is not promoted! I know the Sentiments of European officers concerning Smith's Military Talents. There is not an American officer living half so much respected by the British Army as Smith. There is none more esteemed by Military Men in any part of Europe who have ever heard his Name. I will mention one instance. Count Sarsefield, a very learned and ingenious Man, greatly esteemed and admired in England and Holland as well as France, a Military Man from his Youth, who was in the battles of Minden and Fontenoy, who ranked high in the French Army, became intimately acquainted with Col. Smith. He told me he had sounded him thoroughly, had put every question to him that he could think of, to see if he could puzzle him. And he declared that he had never conversed with any officer in Europe who was more prompt and ready in his answers, or a more perfect Master of every Movement of an Army in grand or in detail. This Man is lost to his Country, and Hull and Wilkinson & are gained. But he is my Son-in-Law' (Capital S, too, this time) 'and that is a sentence of eternal damnation against him.'

A few days later Mr. Adams again voices his deep regret, personal and patriotic, in a letter to Benjamin Waterhouse. 'I know that Col. William Stephens Smith of Lebanon in Smith's Valley, on Chenango River in the State of New York, was and is fitter for the command of the North Western Army, and fitter for Secretary of War than Eustis, Wilkinson, Hull or Dearborn. But his Pride, his Marriage with my Daughter, and the Collisions of Factions have rendered his Appointment impossible.'

CHAPTER XXXVII

'ALL THE MOST REPUTABLE INHABITANTS OF CHENANGO COUNTY'

THE painful operation did not cure Abigail Smith. It may have hastened the end of her sufferings. Surgery was not very advanced in that day. August 6, 1812, Mrs. Adams, answering Caroline's account of their return journey, 'is relieved to hear that Caroline's dear mother bore her journey so well.' But in her heart Mrs. Adams knew. 'After you left me I felt no restraint upon me, and could give way to all I felt and all I had suppressed; my harp was upon the willow, and my spirits at a very low ebb.'

Little was talked of by this time but war and war measures, and the good men of Chenango County, not knowing all that Mr. Adams knew, saw an opportunity for their Colonel to regain his place in the sun, and wrote as follows to a gentleman who rejoiced in the name of Obadiah Gedman and the title of 'Senator for the Western District.' What a picture that brings up of the degree of settlement of the States in 1812!

*'To the Honourable Obadiah Gedman,
'Senator for the Western District.'*

'SIR:

'We the subscribers take the liberty of recommending to your notice and through you to the President of the United States, Colonel William S. Smith of the County of Madison, as a proper Character for filling some important office in the Army of the United States. When we reflect for a moment on the Military talents of Colonel Smith (one of the few remaining heroes of the Revolution) we cannot but feel an anxious solicitude that he may receive an appointment in the Army Worthy his knowledge and experience in the Art of War. — We believe it is from such men as Colonel Smith that we are to expect prosperous Campaigns, and that the American Arms will be crowned with Laurels of Victory as in past times that tried men's souls.

'The Character of Colonel Smith is so well known that it
needs

needs no Eulogium from us. Suffice it to say we feel a conscious confidence in his knowledge of Military tactics and should he be honoured with a Command, . . . We as a testimony of our satisfaction shall at all times feel a willingness under such a Man to Volunteer in the cause of our common Country, and evince to the world that we are Americans in example as well as precept.

‘With Sentiments of the highest respect and

‘Consideration we remain

‘Yours as ever

‘Signed by all the most reputable Inhabitants of the County of Chenango & the adjacent Country.’

There is something touching in this simple letter, ‘We shall at all times feel a willingness to volunteer under such a man in the cause of our common country,’ expresses not only affection and ‘conscious confidence,’ it is proof that they too recognized William Smith’s quality of leadership. He refused, the memorandum tells us, on Christmas Eve, time of memories. Thirteen years before on Christmas Day he had paid last honors to General Washington. Thirty-six years ago that day they had crossed the Delaware together. There had been no Abby Adams, no Timothy Pickering, no Thomas Jefferson, no Miranda in his life that Christmas of ’76, but there had been General Washington who loved him, and a great and glorious Cause to which he had given his best. That memory they could never take from him.

Yet how he longed to go! He was only fifty-seven, the age we set for retirement still several years off. But he knew — he must have known — that the petition of these kind friends would be ignored, to their pain and bewilderment. Also efforts in another quarter had by that time met with success. William Stephens Smith had been elected Federalist member of the House of Representatives for Madison and Herkimer Counties. Mr. Adams, though rejoicing, confides some apprehensions to Dr. Rush:

‘My Son-in-Law’ (capital L) ‘is chosen to Congress and by a vast majority against a formidable Competitor. The Consequence of this I know not. . . . His election is a demonstration of the Confidence and affection of two large Counties, containing

ing near 50,000 souls, in which he had lived in Poverty and Obscurity for many years. He must meet on the same Floor the most malicious and insidious Tool, in Tim. Pickering, of the most envious and malicious enemy he ever had — Alexander Hamilton; both of whom together accomplished his Ruin.'

So the Colonel went to Washington, where Mr. James Madison, who had not been subpoenaed in the Miranda case was President, and Timothy Pickering was occupying a seat in Congress. Perhaps his Friend did not want him to leave her. If so she closed her lips upon the words.

The Colonel went to Washington, but with no light heart; went that he might bequeath that memory of reinstatement to those who bore his name. It was not the service he would have chosen. He was a soldier and he wanted to fight. But he advised Congress out of his military experience in matters of armament, and in formulating a policy of defense against the Indians on the Canadian border — for he had learned to know them and their ways well in 1779. But the interpreting of war needs to official indoor minds is a maddening and usually thankless task to the practical soldier, and as Mr. Adams had foreseen, Timothy Pickering did not help.

That spring Abby had a letter from her mother telling of the death of 'our ancient friend, our physician, the constant correspondent and endearing companion; the benevolent, learned, and ever to be regreted Rush. It is indeed a heavy stroke to your father: . . . A friend of so many years ripening, whom no changes had warped, who had passed together with him through many political conflicts, in the most perilous times, is a loss not to be repaired. . . . I have just received your letter. I see by your handwriting that you are better.'

But Abby was not better. The horror had come back. Perhaps in her lonely struggle she found support in the thought of her Friend in Washington. Perhaps in that consciousness she was happier than he: for we miss his old-time lift and hopefulness in this letter to Caroline. One feels in it a certain sad undertone of relinquishment. He can make a wise and witty speech in Congress, but he no longer feels part of the life that was once his.

'My

‘WASHINGTON, *June 25th*, 1813

‘MY VERY DEAR DAUGHTER:

‘I was made very happy by the receipt of your letter of the 7th. I have enclosed two papers to your uncle; they contain the proceedings of the last week. I am appointed a member of a committee to inquire whether any, and if any, what, provision ought to be made, for the more effectual protection of the northwestern frontier of the U.S. against the incursions of the savages and other enemies. I am very apprehensive it is too late to consult on this subject.

‘The British have landed from 1500 to 2000 regular troops below Norfolk; and with five sail of the line, and attending frigates, sloops, and schooners, threaten the destruction of that important city. Our great folk here of course are not on a bed of roses.

‘It is a great blessing to us, my dear, that your unwearied attentions and assiduities have not impaired your health. Heaven will bless you for these exertions; they excite gratitude in my mind; my affection and love for you cannot be increased.

‘I am your affectionate

‘Father and Friend,

‘W. S. SMITH.’

CHAPTER XXXVIII

'YOUR FRIEND, MY ONLY DAUGHTER'

BUT while the Colonel was in Washington that winter of 1812-13, the end was drawing near for his Friend. She had made him go back to Washington, family letters say, but when they thought she was getting well, she was growing worse; and though unable to cross the room, she determined to go back to Quincy. Did she have still a desperate hope of cure? Or did she know what she was going out to meet, and, like Elaine of Astalot, plan her last journey. Perhaps she had never loved the Valley. Perhaps, she came to hate it at the last. All we know is that, desperate as was her condition, she started on that long dreadful journey home.

Mrs. Adams speaks of it in a letter to Mercy Warren dated July 11th. John had written her 'that it is his mother's most earnest wish to be brought to Quincy, and that although for six weeks she has not been able to get across her room, yet in compliance with her desire he has undertaken to journey with her by slow degrees and, if possible, get her here, which will relieve my mind of that constant anxiety which I daily have to know how she is. Her son gives but a melancholy account of her health. I hope the journey and the change of air, the society of her family and friends will have a favorable effect.'

And so, accompanied by John and Caroline and her sister-in-law, Margaret, Abby started on her way to Quincy — over rough roads, in stage-coach and carriage — vehicles that did not have the springs of to-day — three hundred miles in two weeks. Every inch of the way must have been agony. Both John and Caroline remained this time, and the Colonel hurried to Quincy as soon as he heard.

It was a short visit. On August 16th, three weeks after her arrival, John Adams's letter to Jefferson breaks off sharply: 'I can proceed no further with this letter. Your friend my only daughter, expired yesterday morning in the arms of her husband, in the 49th year of her age . . . forty of which she was the healthiest

healthiest and firmest of us all; since when she has been a monument to suffering and patience.'

'Your friend my only daughter —' No doubt in his selfish way Jefferson had cared. His letters never closed without mention of her. Full well they knew, those men of State, that they could trust her discretion, her silence, her devotion. Like her mother she was ever ready for the service of those she loved. Perhaps that was her strongest characteristic. Now that delicate link in the chain of stronger lives was broken. But she had lived to see her husband once more an honored man, and in that knowledge her soul must have passed in peace.

They buried her, as was the custom of that day, where she died. She lies in the Ancient Burial Place at Quincy in the Adams vault, where her father, her mother, and her brother Thomas were afterwards buried. In a letter to Benjamin Waterhouse Mr. Adams speaks of work that is being done on 'a tomb for my Daughter.'

From St. Petersburg, John Quincy Adams wrote in his measured phrases of his grief at the loss 'of a sister worthy of every sentiment of tenderness and attachment that can warm the heart of a brother.'

John Quincy never expressed himself spontaneously. Even the letter he wrote to his brother Thomas when his mother died is pedantic, but to the day of his death he held the image of his sister in his heart.

Almost a quarter of a century later, he wrote of her to Caroline, whose daughter Elizabeth so resembled her: . . . 'But it is the resemblance of a period of her life which scarcely any living person but myself can remember, many years before you were born. She who was the dearest of mothers to you could not have been other than a kind and affectionate sister. Among the greatest felicities of my life, I deem it, to have had such a mother and such a sister.'

John Quincy Adams's long poem in memory of his sister, dedicated to this young Elizabeth, 'dates' appealingly. The two final verses have the pensive charm of lines come upon in some old forgotten burial ground, beneath a carven urn:

'Though many a year has passed away,
Since she resigned her mortal clay,

And

And slumbered in the tomb, —
Yet Memory brings her form to me,
In vernal blossoms just like thee,
Unconscious of her doom.

'Her days were short, and chequered o'er
With joy and sorrows mingled store,
And Fortune's treacherous game —
But never since creation's hour,
Forth from Heaven's Almighty power
A purer spirit came.'

CHAPTER XXXIX

WAR TIME AND WEDDINGS

AFTER his wife's death, Colonel Smith remained with Mr. and Mrs. Adams until the opening of Congress. 'October 7, 1814,' we read in the 'Annals' of Congress, 'William Stephens Smith appeared and took his seat.' He very shortly arose from that seat to supplement the neglected education of the Secretary of War in matters military — a speech that was a delicately wielded rapier in the deft hand of a gentleman.

The bill was one to 'Authorize the Conversion of Three Regiments of Infantry into Riflemen.' Rising with his grace, speaking with his ineffable courtesy, the Colonel proceeded to show the assembled gentlemen that the proposed measure would create 'Sixteen major-generals, thirty-two brigadier-generals, sixty-four colonels, one hundred and twenty-eight lieutenant-colonels' — continuing the long list up to 'sixty-four surgeons, two hundred and forty-six assistant surgeons, thirty-two brigade chaplains — *God save the people* — one hundred and twenty-eight drum and fife majors . . .' finally reaching a climax of '7972 corporals,' involving an addition to the already considerable war debt of over \$138,000,000. 'My objection, Mr. Speaker,' the Colonel continued, 'to give the sanction of my vote to this tremendous accumulation of debt upon my constituents and my country cannot be attributed to a want of patriotism. My family presents four brothers, two of whom, with myself, bore arms and were honored with distinguished command through the Revolutionary War from its commencement to its conclusion; and the fourth bore a commission of First lieutenant in the army disbanded by Mr. Jefferson. . . .'

Then the rapier plays lightly for a moment about the heads of Dr. Eustis and Dr. Dearborn. For the Secretary of War, no walking dictionary of Military terms, had demanded one hundred and twenty-five thousand *and one* men, 'and had thus,' the Colonel remarked with a glint of humor, 'marked the Honorable major-general Henry Dearborn as an odd man. I have often, Mr. Speaker, heard of a man amongst a thousand, but
it

it was reserved for Dr. William Eustis, late Secretary of War, to designate his friend Dr. Henry Dearborn as one among 125,000. . . .'

When the vote was taken the bill was defeated. The Colonel had saved his country a staggering draught upon the Exchequer.

His next contribution to defense policies was in March when he recommended a floating battery which he had seen tested the preceding summer, and which he had discussed with Commodore Bainbridge who was enthusiastic about it, but which the non-militant gentlemen of the House seem to have regarded with distrust.

When Congress was dismissed, the Colonel went again to Quincy for a happier visit, for Caroline had found her Dearest Friend.

On September 11, 1814, she was married to John Peter de Windt, a substantial youth of Dutch descent, whose forbears had reached the Hudson River Valley via the Dutch island of Curaçao. A long-headed young man, John Peter, who made two millions before he died, in a day when millions were rarer than they are now.

The Colonel had to leave the day after he had given his Caroline to John Peter. When Congress opened that autumn of 1814, he had several things to say, for during the summer recess the British had been doing things to Washington, burning what they were pleased to call 'the President's Palace' and generally having things their own way. The lack of defense had been ignominious, and the Colonel's heart was hot within him at this humiliation in the eyes of England, tortured at being shut out from an army so obviously in need of everything that he had to give. He arose to call the attention of the House to a neglected resolution to investigate the capture of Washington, for General Armstrong and General Winder had absent-mindedly forgotten to answer the questions of the investigating committee. 'With submission to the Committee,' the Colonel wondered why it 'expected those persons to furnish proofs of their own imbecility and misconduct.'

This was strong language. Mr. Speaker was pained. He rose hastily to remind the Gentleman from New York that no motion was before the House. That gentleman replied by
moving

moving that the investigating committee be requested to report. A soothing Gentleman from Kentucky arose next and suggested waiting until the chairman of the committee was present (an upsetting firebrand, this military person from New York). The Colonel, busy committing his resolution to paper, looked up to remark that if the Gentleman from Kentucky would communicate his sentiments without delay to his Colleague the chairman it would save the time involved in making the motion. 'The crisis,' he observed incisively, 'requires prompt examination of such events as have occurred at this place.' They would not have occurred if the Colonel had been in command.

He had a letter from Mrs. Adams, written after he had left her. We hear the neigh of the old war horse as she discusses with him the victories of that last little misunderstanding with the British.

'QUINCY, *October 1st, 1814*

'DEAR SIR:

'It is already three weeks since you left us; I have not any knowledge of your progress farther than New Haven, where General Humphreys informed me that he had the pleasure of meeting you.' (This was our old friend David Humphreys. *He* had been made a general in the war of 1812.)

'I wish to hear from you, although I cannot expect that you have anything agreeable of a public nature to communicate, from the desolate walls of Washington. I will, however, turn my face from that forlorn place, and congratulate you upon the triumphant victory of McDonough, on Lake Champlain and of McCombs at Plattsburgh, which have gathered fresh laurels for our country.

'I wish for information respecting our connections at Washington. From Judge Cranch letters have been received here, but I do not know anything of our other friends, whether they have been sufferers. Will you be so good as to inform yourself, and write me word?

'Boston continues to be fortified in every direction, and numerous troops drilled and disciplined seven hours every day. I perceive the apple of discord is thrown out in Congress, and the removal of the seat of government proposed. . . .

'I

'I should like to hear how you are accommodated; I know you can submit to privations like an old soldier. Clouds and darkness hang over us; public credit is shaken, and the banks trembling. Where the ark of our safety must rest, time will unfold.'

But four months later the war was ended, and Mrs. Adams wrote to congratulate Caroline upon it. That spring of 1815 also brought the return of William Steuben Smith from Russia, where he had been serving as Secretary of the Legation. William was married now to Catherine Johnson, a younger sister of John Quincy Adams's Louisa. In the following delightful letter Mr. Adams congratulates himself upon his first great-grandchild, Caroline Amelia. Perhaps even the Adams family was beginning to feel a bit dizzy with the multiplicity of Abigails:

'QUINCY, May 8, 1815

'MY DEAR SIR — [thus Mr. Adams to his grandson.]

'I congratulate you on your arrival in your shall I say, native country, after an absence in the frozen Regions of Russia, of six years, with your Lady and my first Great Grand-daughter. Mine is the most curious posterity. Some have been born in Quincy, Some in Boston, Some in London, Some on Long Island, Some in New York, Some in Berlin and Some in St. Petersburg. How many will be born in Cedar Grove, in Utica [for "Abbe" was now married, at sixteen] here and there, and everywhere I know not. But whenever and wherever they may commence Existence, I hope they will consider the U.S. their Birth Place and their home.

'My Love to you all. Kiss your Wife and my Great Grand-daughter, my second Caroline Amelia, who I pray may copy the first, for your Grandfather.

'JOHN ADAMS.'

But two months later we find kind 'Uncle Thomas' Adams sympathizing with William over 'the afflictive event that has bereaved you of a lovely child.' So poor little Caroline Amelia did not survive being born in frozen Russia and carried home over windy seas.

The Colonel was a good deal on Mrs. Adams's mind in those last days. On November 22d of that year, 'My birthday and

71,' she speaks of him, writing to William, now in New York: 'I cover the Letter to your Father to you. I wrote him one last week and sent it to the valley, not recollecting that he might have left it. If he has not received it, you will be so good as to tell him.'

Congress did not open until December that year. The Democratic ticket had been victorious, but in spite of that Colonel Smith was elected by a small majority. His opponent, Westel Willoughby, however, refused to be defeated, finally going so far as to protest the decision before the House after the Colonel was in his seat. The matter was then up to the Election Committee, and this Election Committee was small, but potent — Timothy Pickering's name headed the list! We hardly need to read further to learn that the decision was in favor of Westel Willoughby, whose protest had probably been incited by the indefatigable Mr. Pickering. And so, on December 13, 1815, Colonel Smith relinquished his seat — more than that, his life. Destiny had permitted him once more, for a little while, to serve his country, but now that service was ended.

In a letter to William the following spring, Mrs. Adams again mentions him: 'I have not been able to answer a very pleasant Letter from your Father, which I received after I was sick. I am now something stronger, and my physician says, I shall get up again, but a small blast would blow me away. . . . You will be so good as to give me information of your Brother as soon as you hear. I have not any Letter of a later date than Novbr 7th. Remember me to Aunt Nancy when you see her. I presume you will be attentive to her, as a State of single blessedness is not the most Eligible in the World.'

But it was only that Judge Masters had not yet taken that stage-coach journey. Nancy Smith was not to die in the Ineligible State of Single Blessedness, but was to live to be a great and long remembered personality in the Valley, the last survivor of the Colonel's sisters and brothers.

'Let me know when you hear from your Father, how is he this winter? His situation at the Valley must be lonesome and melancholy. Present my Love to your dear Spouse. . . . My Love, Louissa's, and Susan's, who is the Life of the House & grown a sprightly Lass, since you saw her.

'Your affectionate G.M.

'ABIGAIL ADAMS'

CHAPTER XL

‘SERVING AS AIDE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON’

THE Colonel was alone in the Valley. His children were far from him, living their own lives. In March, 1816, he lost his brothers, Justus and James, and on April first his mother. Six months after his last opportunity to serve his country was taken from him, he died. He cannot have had a long illness. We do not know just how or when the last call came; but word reached Caroline in time, and she was with him when the last taps sounded. Her grandmother, far away, can only pour out her heart in letters.

‘BOSTON, *June 5th*, 1816

‘Our anxiety to hear from you led me to send to the office this morning for letters; there I found yours of May 31st, containing tidings that my fears had anticipated. . . . I feel the stroke as a renewal of what I have passed through, and as an anticipation of what I may be called to endure, yet a little while and I also shall join the great congregation. If your father should survive for you to see him, and receive this letter from me before he departs, give my kindest love to him, and say to him, I hope to meet him and my dear daughter in the world to which we are hastening. I can add no more, my heart is full; ever your affectionate grandmother,

‘A. A.’

Mrs. Adams’s next tells us of the end:

‘QUINCY, *June 21st*, 1816

‘It was with a heavy heart and trembling hand, that I yesterday broke the seal of your letter to your uncle. I knew that he was gone to Boston, and as I had not any letter myself, I could not wait in such suspense; the contents of the letter has left me little expectation of hearing that the lamp of life is not nearly extinguished. . . . I had written thus far, when Louisa brought me the paper, with the notice of your father’s departure on the

10th

10th. Have I lived to this day, to mourn with my dear child the loss of both parents? Little did I think the last winter, that I should have been the survivor; I weep with you, and pray you may be supported by that Almighty Power, who has called you to this trial. I have not expected you to write me, distressed as you must have been. How much we have all wished we could have been near you, to have alleviated some of your sorrows, by sharing them with you. My heart is too full to write.

A. A.'

Poor gallant Colonel! Alone with his memories in the wild lands that had exacted such bitter toll of the last years of a brave soldier, a successful diplomat, a charming gentleman — we cannot but feel that his end was a deliberate letting go of a life that had lost everything that made it worth living. Friends he must always have had, but the vital relationships had been severed; his life which had begun so brilliantly, that had been crowned for a time with happiness and achievement, was now as a useless garment dropped by hands with no will to hold.

For both, the end was sad. Abby died 'in his arms,' in her father's home surrounded by their love — yet how pitiful a death! William Smith died June 10, 1816, almost on the anniversary of his wedding. In June thirty years before he had first met his Abigail Amelia in London.

On June 17th the notice appeared in the records of the Society of the Cincinnati of which he had been so vital a part. His will named his son William Steuben Smith executor and sole legatee. From his life, his letters, his portraits, we have come to know him; a man who for over twenty-five years had suffered injustice and envious obstruction from those in power without losing his charity, his sweetness of nature, his courage, or his gift for happiness. It is surprising to us to-day to realize that not even Washington or John Adams were able, beyond a certain point, to have about them the men they wanted, or to avoid those they did not trust. It is evident that no form of government can free itself from the invisible power of intrigue, the secret puller of strings.

They said of William Stephens Smith that he never spoke ill of any one, yet when his country's safety was menaced by the
incompetent

incompetent or the disloyal, he denounced fearlessly without thought of the consequences to himself. His soul had its invincible armor against his enemies, his career had not. He was a very practical idealist, but sometimes the radiance of the vision obscured the obstacles in the path.

That his talents did not bring him greater opportunity was due not only to envious Pickerings and selfish Jeffersons; he was proud — they all said it. He expected his works to speak for him, he would not ask for himself. He could fight to the death for a cause, but not for personal advantage. He suffered, too, from the uncertainties of the transition period in which he lived. In the Revolution he was a brilliant young officer, but when the war was over his occupation was gone. He was a successful diplomat, yet at the time Mr. Adams asked to have him appointed as his successor at the Court of St. James's, Great Britain was not sure that she had any use for an American Minister. After the selfless nobility of the struggle for independence, an era of politics entered into the formation of the new American Republic. In this atmosphere Colonel Smith was at a disadvantage, for he would not stoop to intrigue or the manipulation of men's minds. Then because he had wife and children to think of, he turned to another opening — for his mind was ever alert — the tremendous possibilities that lay in the land development of the country. In that game of chance he both lost and won. Yet wealth he can only have valued as a means. He was a soldier, a man of action, and in the routine of a Government office his soul cannot have been satisfied. He had grown up a living part of great events. He longed to open wide the doors of freedom and liberty to all, and he believed that the hour had struck. In this ideal and this conviction we have the true key to his fatal participation in the Miranda case.

Colonel Smith was buried at some distance from his home in a plot in the town of Sherburne donated by his brother Justus to the Second Congregational Church at Sherbourne, West Hill. There several members of his family, including his mother, were also buried. The stone that had once marked the spot disappeared in the course of the years, and his grave¹ long remained
without

¹ Since this was written, three chapters of the *Daughters of the American Revolution* have done honor to Colonel Smith. The John Harris Chapter, of Norwich, N.Y., has arranged

without a stone to mark it, until the unselfish devotion of one man, Marcus Raymond, neither kith nor kin, the author of the brief biography of him in the New York Genealogical Record, erected a monument to his memory. Mr. Raymond, who lived in that vicinity too late to have seen the Colonel in the flesh, had treasured from boyhood some sentiment about him. 'All knowledge of the spot had been lost to his descendants,' he wrote, yet happily the memory of the fact had survived in the valley. 'It was a labor of love,' said Mr. Raymond, 'to gather up the broken threads of memory and tradition from many sources, until it was made clear that this was the place where this distinguished soldier and civilian was buried.'

In November, 1888, the stone was placed. The inscription has a certain fine simplicity:

Here lie the mortal remains of
COLONEL WILLIAM S. SMITH
Who died at Lebanon, N. Y.
June 10, 1816,
Aged 61 years.

In the war of Independence
He fought in twenty-two battles,
Serving as
Aide to General Washington,
Who always held him
In affectionate esteem.

And on the other side:

In Memory of
ABIGAIL ADAMS
Wife of Colonel William S. Smith.

Another strand in destiny's pattern, view it mystically or coincidentally as you will, Miranda — the dark thread that cut across the gay arabesques of the Colonel's figure — Miranda died that same year in a prison in Cadiz, his brave dream of emancipation a broken bubble, though it was yet to come.

arranged for perpetual care of his grave and has sign-posted the paths leading to it. The Oneida Chapter, of Utica, has added a marker; and the James Madison Chapter, of Hamilton, has marked the great flagstone once the doorstep of his house, now all that is left of his last earthly home, the little stone house in Smith's Valley. There seems a certain spiritual significance in the fact that its only remaining stone should be a step, an entrance.

CHAPTER XLI

'UNTIL THE LAST TRUMP SHALL SOUND'

IN October, 1817, Abigail Adams was stricken with typhus fever. On October 28th, she died. Yet bound up, intertwined as his life had been with hers, John Adams lived eight years without his 'Friend,' virile as few are, in the late winter of his life. In letters to Jefferson we hear of him philandering hither and yon in Boston. '... Trumbull drew me by the cords of an old friendship to see his pictures on Saturday where I got a great cold. The air of Faneuil Hall is changed' (not Mr. Adams), 'I have not been used to catch cold there.'

True, writing confidentially to dear Caroline about Independence Day — his forty-fourth — the word feeble escapes; 'I was not able to accept the condescending invitation of the government of the state and the various societies in Boston, to celebrate the 4th of July; though my head would have struck the stars, if I could have made so glorious a figure as my ancient, excellent friend Carroll made at Baltimore on that day. But the heat of the season, with the pomps and ceremonies, could not have been supported by my feeble frame. . . .'

'My head must have struck the stars —' John Adams could strike off a fine phrase in his nineties!

About once a year he congratulates Caroline[†] upon the début of another de Windt — this time it was Caroline's husband.

'MONTICELLO, *Sept.* 8 1821

'DEAR DE WINT' (Note that address! With the times Mr. Adams has moved to an almost raffish familiarity. Remember the

[†] Of the children of William and Abigail Smith, Caroline was the only one to carry on the descent. William, who, though he had something of a diplomatic career, seems not to have gone far in it, had no children that survived. His home was in New York and like his father he was a man who made friends. John, for whom President Washington picked sugar plums from the cake, practiced law in Hamilton. He never married. Caroline, who seems most to have inherited the quality of both parents, dear Caroline had twelve children. Their descendants are widespread and numerous. Her end was tragic, a dark trick that Destiny sometimes plays in gentle lives; she was drowned when a Hudson River steamboat, the Henry Clay, racing a rival ship, caught fire, July 28, 1852 — a disaster that to the imaginations of that day had the dread quality of a Titanic disaster in ours. Her granddaughter, Miss Caroline van Wagonen, remembers as a very young child the bringing ashore of the bodies.

the days when he addressed his daughter as 'My dear Mrs. Smith,' and his grandson as 'Dear Sir'!) 'I have this moment received the joyful News in your Letter of the 3d. Say to Caroline "Macte virtute esto." Go on and bless the world with as many daughters as Providence will permit. If she educates them to be as good as their Mother, Grand Mothers Great Grandmothers Great Great Grandmothers and Great Great Great Grandmothers, they will be the Salt of the Earth. I have known this whole generation of Ladies, and a wiser or better race never existed in this world.'

The year 1825 saw many things, among them the inauguration of John Quincy Adams as President, and that return of Lafayette to America in commemoration of which the Staffordshire Potteries turned out so many blue souvenir platters — and John Adams lived to see it all.

Lafayette came again. Neither the light-hearted Colonel, his comrade, nor the Colonel's sweet lady could be there to welcome him; General Washington, his beloved commander, had gone long since; but two old men came out to greet him, one at Boston, one at Washington, with arms outstretched and tears streaming down their aged cheeks — the last earthly meeting of Jefferson, Lafayette, and Adams.

July 4, 1826, there was a patriotic celebration at Quincy, for it was fifty years since that first great day. From his chair at the open window John Adams, who had lived to see half a century of it, sent them a toast, 'Independence forever.' Those who sat with him in that quiet upper chamber could hear the distant shouts from the village when the people received the old man's last message. There, a few hours later, he died — not in his bed, but sitting up, looking out at God's world which he had known so long and loved so well. A few hours before, Thomas Jefferson opened dying eyes to ask, 'Is this the Fourth?' Adams's last thought was of Jefferson — 'Thomas Jefferson still lives. . . .' But Jefferson had already preceded him on that last journey.

Strange bond of destiny that held these two together — framers of the immortal document, rivals in the seat of government, mortal enemies, soul-friends. If it be true that we live many lives on earth, these two must have known each other in varying relationships, carrying from one life to another that debt

debt of good and evil, of love and hate that the East calls Karma.

Thomas Jefferson in defeating John Adams ended his political career. He sacrificed, when he might have saved, Colonel Smith. Yet Jefferson had been fond of the Colonel and his Lady — always a woman with few defenses against the world. Believers in reincarnation would see in the reactions of these lives upon each other a strange pattern of destiny, of which perhaps the most significant touch is the fastening of the final thread, the dual exit, July 4, 1826, and John Adams's words: 'Jefferson still lives.'

Some have interpreted them to reveal the dying flicker of a lifelong rivalry. But the bond that bound Adams and Jefferson was stronger than the conflict of their egos. Rather it would seem to mean that John Adams's last thought was of the strongest human tie that held him to earth. John Quincy, his pride, his fulfillment, was occupying the proudest position in the land. He had his son Thomas and multitudinous grandchildren. But the man who had stood beside him in the great days through which they had lived together, who through the spiritual contact of letters had meant the deepest companionship of his last days, Jefferson was his last earthly thought.

From early days down into the Victorian period a great deal was made of last words. They were listened for, edited, recorded, and often manufactured, of course. Toward the end of the nineteenth century Last Words began to be ridiculed, and revolutionary spirits began to show — mostly in fiction — that they were usually irrelevant, trivial, absurd. But the truth lies deeper than that. In that moment of the mind's last flicker before it sinks into eternity, sometimes it is the very *soul* that speaks. Louis Napoleon's weary, 'Were you at Sedan?' Jefferson's 'Is it the Fourth?' express the soul's recognition of its heights, its depths. Equally, John Adams's words — more personal, as his affection was the stronger — tell a story so far reaching, so subtle that it is indeed painting the lily to analyze it.

They laid John Adams beside his Friend in the Ancient Burial Place at Quincy. In the Old Church you may read their epitaphs, holding a certain solemn grandeur of their period.

'Here

'Here lies John Adams who pledged his life, fortune and sacred honor to the Independence of his country, summoned on July 4th, 1826, to the judgment of God.

'At his side sleeps until the trump shall sound, Abigail his beloved and only wife.'

In 1834, Lafayette died. He was the last to go. It was the passing of a great era.

CHAPTER XLII

THE PORTRAITS

A YEAR after Mrs. Adams's death, John Quincy Adams answered a letter from Caroline concerning the ownership of the Copley portrait of her mother, originally his. 'I gave the portrait of my beloved and lamented sister, your dear mother, to mine without reserve, to be disposed of at her pleasure. And however gratifying it would be to me to be the possessor of it myself, I acknowledge your still stronger claim, and were it mine to give away again, would ask your acceptance of it. I have no such power, for it is yours by the donation of her to whom alone it belonged. Yet the truly delicate and affectionate doubt of my ever honored father, which induced you to make the inquiries in your letter, excites in my breast emotions of a soothing, though melancholy pleasure.'

Evidently old John Adams, alone in Quincy with his memories, did not like to think of his dear daughter's portrait so far from that New England which he knew to be the center of the universe, in a strange Dutch house full of children with Dutch names.

His reluctance to have it leave his home and pass out of John Quincy's possession 'excited in the breast' of that soul of justice and honor, 'emotions of a soothing though melancholy pleasure.' But we suspect that his 'ever-honored father' was right. When the old De Windt house was burned in 1868 the Copley portrait perished. With Caroline dead, her house occupied by descendants who had never seen their grandmother, and who lacked both her loving memory of the original, and the earlier (and later) valuations of Copley's work, none contrived to save it in their panic. To the average mid-nineteenth-century American, a family portrait was a family portrait, not a Copley or a Gilbert Stuart. And so a work of art and a precious human document went up in smoke. If the Copley had remained in New England, the chances are that it would be in existence to-day.

There is another letter from John Quincy Adams almost a quarter of a century later about the portrait, a steel engraving
of

Mrs Caroline Amelia De Wmelt, Cedar grove
Fishkill Landing - New York

Washington. St. B. 21 3 25 June 1841

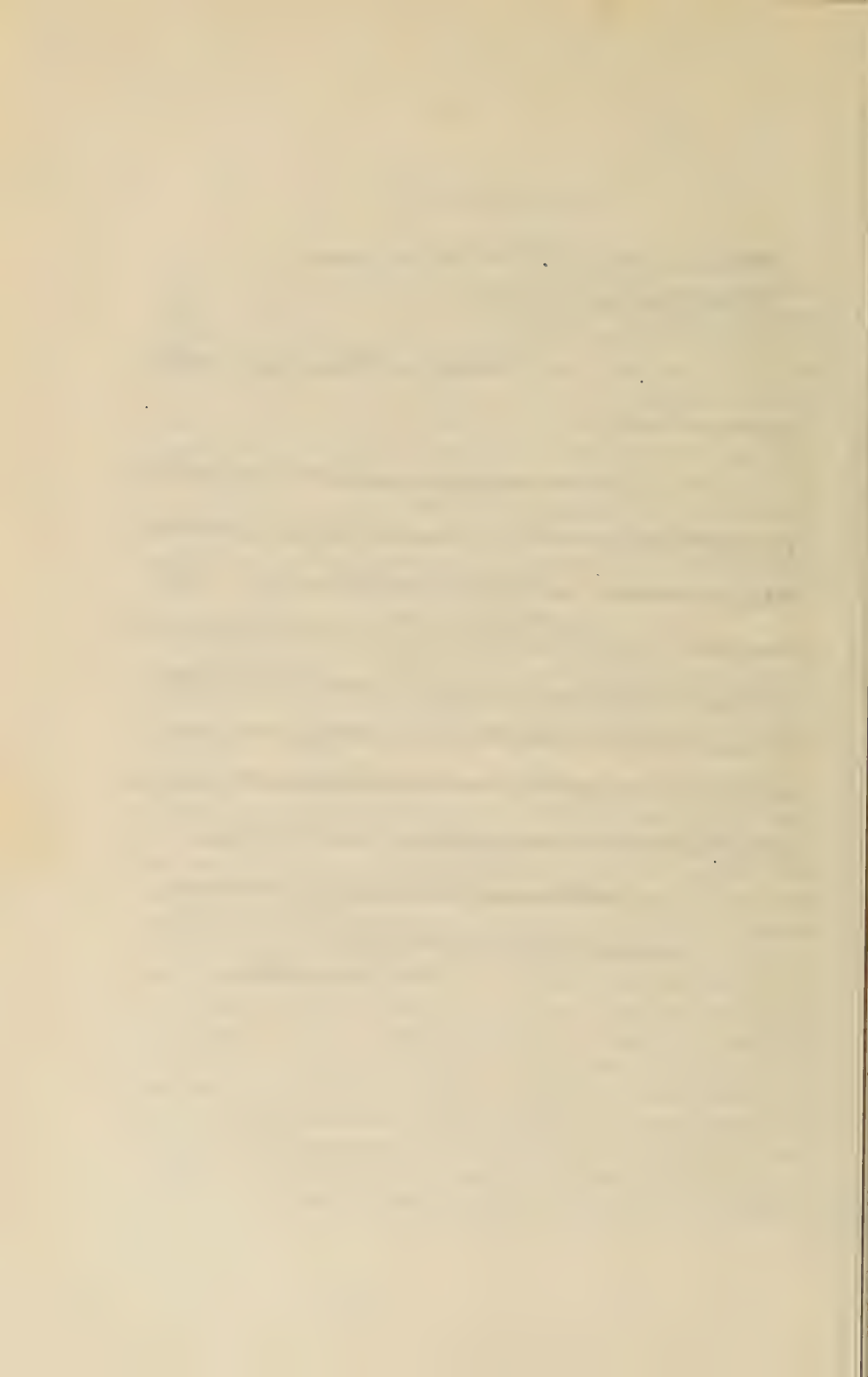
My dear Niece

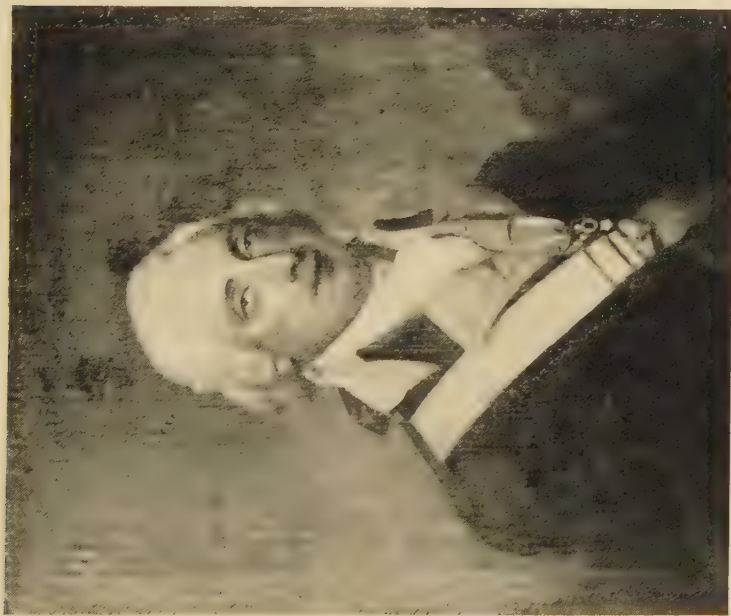
after apologizing to you for the delay to answer
your Letter of the 10th inst^l. I have only to say that although
I have no distinct recollection of my Letter to you accom-
panying the Portrait by Copley of my ever dear and lamented
Sister, your mother, you have my free permission to publish
it, and that I shall heartily welcome any good engraving
of the Portrait - upon which I can never look but with emotions
of the tenderness and most affectionate remembrance.

I am, with kindest, and indelible attachment

My dear Niece, your friend and Uncle

John Quincy Adams.





COLONEL WILLIAM STEPHENS SMITH
The Stuart portrait at Yale University



ABIGAIL ADAMS SMITH AT TWENTY-ONE
The engraving after the Copley portrait

of which was now to form the frontispiece to Caroline's devoted disorderly little volume.

'WASHINGTON, H.R.U.S. 24 June 1841

'MY DEAR NIECE:

'Although I have no distinct recollection of my Letter to you accompanying the Portrait by Copley of my ever dear and lamented Sister, your Mother, you have my free permission to publish it, and I shall heartily welcome any good engraving of the Portrait, upon which I can never look but with emotions of the tenderest and most affectionate remembrance.

'I am, with kindred and indelible attachment,

'My dear Niece, your friend and Uncle

'JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.'

And now a few words about the portraits:

There is only *one* original portrait of Abigail Adams Smith in existence, the vivid and intriguing likeness by Mather Brown ¹ which descended to Brooks Adams from his father Charles Francis Adams, John Quincy's son, and which still hangs in the Brooks Adams's house at Quincy, companioning Mather Brown's portrait of the Colonel.

The lost Copley we know to-day from the fine little engraving made from the Portrait for Caroline's book in 1841. This reproduction was considered excellent by those familiar with the original.

The Copley was painted in London about 1786, the Mather Browns a little later, after their marriage. In both the hair is powdered. Those who are interested to know how the Colonel's Lady looked may be glad to hear that the melancholy looking, long-nosed likeness which appeared a few years ago in a book in which Abby received some passing mention and also among the illustrations for a magazine article about Mrs. John Adams, were reproduced from an inferior engraving made from the original

¹ Mather Brown was a talented young Bostonian. His parents were Tories, who took refuge in England at the beginning of the Revolution. Like the great Stuart and Trumbull he was a pupil of Benjamin West's. Brown painted a number of celebrities in London beginning with George the Third and the future George the Fourth, and including John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. His technique was often brilliant, although his work was uneven. His portrait of Abby is one of his fine canvases.

original *engraving*, possibly from the colored one in The Republican Court. The first engraving was made directly from the *portrait*. Unfortunately it became a basis for later inferior reproductions, of which there were apparently many in circulation in the seventies and eighties. It is reassuring to know that this dismal version of Abby's charming face was due to the inexpert hand of the mid-Victorian engraver, and not to that of her Creator.

In the Copley we see her a little *triste*, as they said in Paris — spirit more strongly marked than flesh. But Mather Brown, painting her as a happy young wife, has caught some of the piquancy and shrewd humor that she also possessed.

There are three fine portraits of Colonel Smith in existence, two by Gilbert Stuart, one by Mather Brown. There is also a canvas — originally by John Trumbull,¹ but since a sufferer by collaboration — that has long passed as his portrait. This canvas — probably because it was in the possession of one of the great grandchildren and believed by its owner to be a portrait of Colonel Smith — has unfortunately been the 'counterfeit' to recreate him for posterity.

The last inheritor of this Trumbull hung it over a stovepipe hole that seems to have been active, and one day it was observed that part of the face had been burned away. After this the portrait was sold; but the story does not begin — or end — there.

An astrologer would probably discover that it was painted under the subtle influence of the planet Neptune, creator of confusion. To unravel the mystery would require the combined gifts of a clairvoyant and Scotland Yard. The face is not the face of *any* of the other portraits, all of which resemble each other; what is most convincing of all — it does not resemble the
Colonel's

¹ It is said that the inheritors of this Trumbull portrait at one time relegated it to the bathroom, having persuaded themselves that the Colonel had dissipated the Adams fortune which they might otherwise have enjoyed — a quaint instance of the misapprehensions of posterity. We have John Adams's word for it that the money the Colonel spent — and lost — was his own, made by himself, not borrowed or otherwise acquired from his wife's family. Mr. Adams more than once refers with disapproval to the Colonel's wealth. He felt that the Colonel rather boasted about having made it without aid from the Government. Indeed, Mr. Adams rather disapproved of wealth as such, and there *was* no Adams fortune. Their circumstances, though comfortable, were moderate.

Colonel's features — carefully painted as a miniature — in Trumbull's 'Capture of the Hessians.' All four of these likenesses show the subject's fine aquiline nose, while in the engraving (a poor one) of the original Trumbull, the nose is actually concave. Yet the eyes are the large, clear, rather light eyes noticeable not only in the Colonel's portraits, but in that of his sister Sally — a peculiarity of hers remarked by John Quincy Adams and evidently a family feature. This makes it seem probable that it was a portrait of one of the Colonel's brothers.¹ But the confusion goes deeper than that.

The early reproductions of this canvas in circulation in the eighties show it as described above. But this ambiguous portrait was *twice* restored; the first time — inadequately, no doubt — while still in the possession of the family. But when the last restorer was through restoring the restoration of the ravages of the stovepipe, a totally new person emerged to masquerade as William Stephens Smith — an alien type, eyes aslant, wide high-boned cheeks, futile incurved nose, weak pouting lips, straight untidy hair; in short, a face bearing no single point of resemblance either to Colonel Smith or to the engraving from Trumbull's canvas. Yet it bears the Colonel's name on a plate of brass. This canvas is not in a public collection and, so far as I know, has not been reproduced since its last 'restoration.'

What happened can be guessed. Probably the restorer — who was at least no amateur in his handling of the brush — found himself working on a wet canvas so covered that he had lost the clue of resemblance. Then, perhaps consoling himself with the reflection that the subject was long dead, proceeded to lay in a fancy portrait, inclining to a type, one suspects, of his own race. Turn to the other portraits of Colonel Smith with his aristocratic nose, his beautifully rolled and powdered curls — and the full injustice of this libel upon his splendor is obvious.

When I began my search for the portraits, all of which had passed out of the possession of the family, a reproduction of this Trumbull (in its first, not its last estate) was the only one to be found in the reference files of the libraries. It may be well, therefore, to give briefly the history of the authentic portraits.

The

¹ Undoubtedly John, since he was also a member of the Cincinnati, whose insignia the subject is wearing.

The Mather Brown was painted in London about 1786. The two Stuarts in New York several years later. With the Stuart portraits we pass from the twilight of mystery and misconception into the daylight of fact.

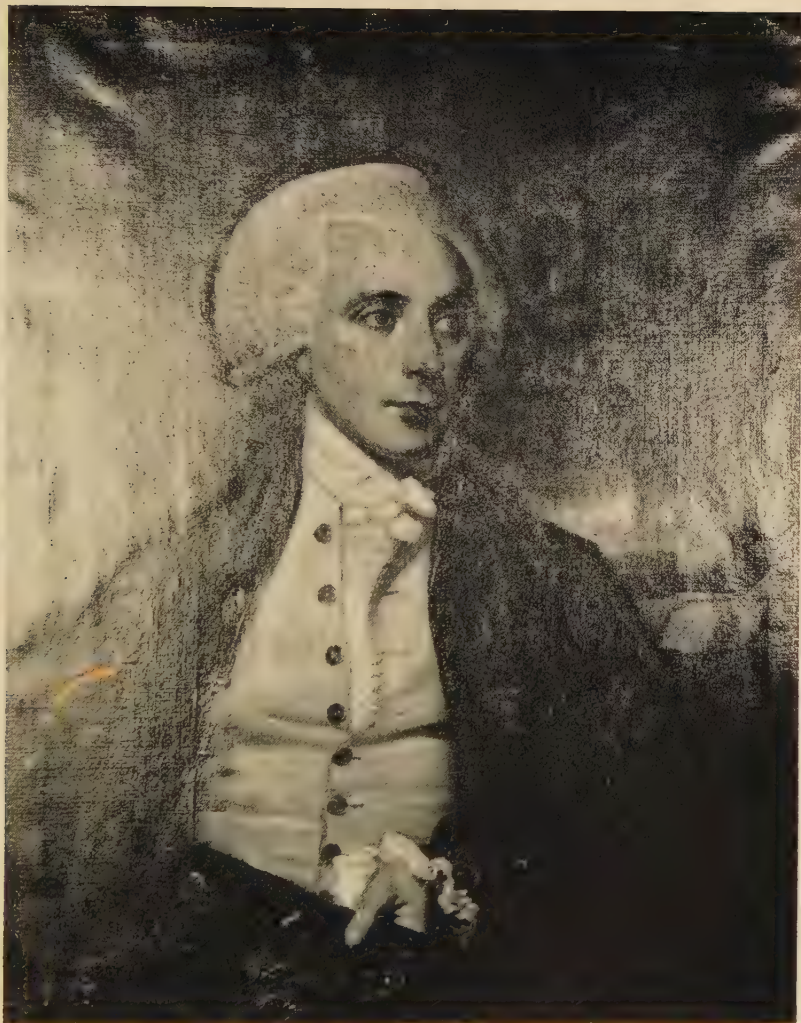
I had heard through a descendant of one of the Colonel's sisters of the existence of another portrait which I subsequently identified as the Gilbert Stuart now owned by Mr. Herbert L. Pratt. This had been bequeathed by the Colonel's mother to her daughter Elizabeth, who married a cousin Smith. Don't try to follow it, for *her* daughter, Mary Ann Buchanan Smith, who inherited it, actually repeated this grave sin against genealogists by becoming Mrs. James Smith. The portrait was sold about fourteen years ago and its present location was unknown to the descendants, but eventually I discovered it. Later, through Miss Abigail Louisa Lynch, a great-granddaughter of Charles and Sally Adams, I learned of the existence of a second Stuart which had been left by the Colonel's mother to his sister Nancy, Mrs. Masters, whose granddaughter, the Countess de Robiglio, afterwards bequeathed it to Yale.

This canvas looks as if it were the earlier of the two Stuarts. It shows the Colonel in the blue and buff of his Revolutionary uniform with powdered curls — and that day he had a ribbon in his hair, and the decoration of the Cincinnati on his breast! In Lawrence Park's book this portrait bears the note, 'Not listed in Mason,' also the statement that it 'had not come to the attention of Mr. Park.' But judging as one versed in the ways of the brush, and the indefinable personality of art, rather than in the finger-prints of identification, I feel it to be a Stuart, although not painted in his most interesting manner. The eyes, however — those curious brilliant blue eyes that seem to be filled with light — were strongly felt in this canvas.

The beautiful Stuart in Mr. Pratt's Collection was painted in 1794,^{*} when the Colonel was vice-president of the Cincinnati.

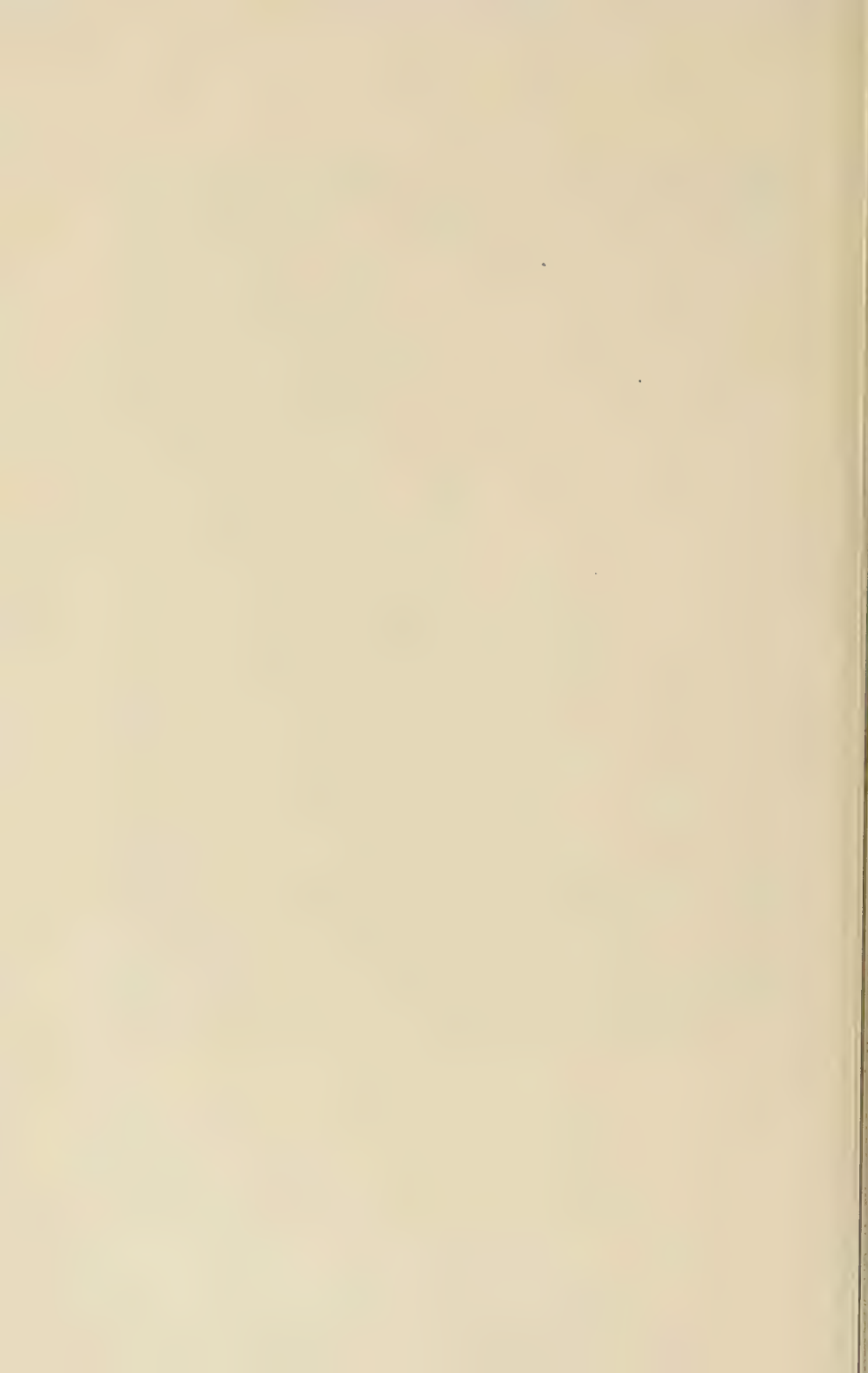
It

^{*} This portrait was used as one of the illustrations for a magazine article of mine about the Colonel and his Lady. Over thirty-five years ago it was included among the illustrations for a commemorative history of the Centennial of Washington's inauguration. I can find no record of its reproduction after 1892 until I made use of it in 1926, but it was subsequently reproduced in the bulletin of an historical society, and about the same time the beautiful collection of Stuart's work assembled by the late Lawrence Park was published, containing both Stuart portraits of Colonel Smith.



COLONEL WILLIAM STEPHENS SMITH

From the portrait by Mather Brown painted in London about 1787



It shows him in golden brown silk and lace ruffles, and is a fine example of the artist's work.

It is from this portrait, painted when he was thirty-nine, that we are able to reconstruct the Colonel, soul and flesh, for Stuart, like all great painters, never idealized his subjects. He shows us a man dark-skinned and ruddy, undoubtedly dark-haired under his powder; plenty of nose, but a fine one — thin, high-bridged, full of character, the face of a man of innate dignity, integrity, courage, an unbreakable spirit; one who was, as they said, a superb tactician, yet in battle a dynamic soldier, heart aflame. And first and last it is the portrait of a Great Gentleman.

Mather Brown shows him in a different mood. This portrait is much finer in the original than in the reproduction. Here we see our Colonel in the leisurely atmosphere of the English court, more the cavalier, the lover, the poet. On the whole we feel, whatever her trials, that Abigail Amelia Smith was a fortunate woman to have had and held the devotion of such a man.

Perhaps, reserved, sensitive and unadventurous spirit, she was not the type of woman best fitted for the kind of life a man like the Colonel is liable to give to wife and family. The very qualities that caused her to choose him out of a world of men were those that laid her open to 'fortune's treacherous game' — a life-long sore spot in John Quincy's loving heart. But also it is easy to understand why the warmth and spontaneity of his ardent, electric temperament attracted an emotional nature too much held in check by the inhibitions of New England. And up to the time that the chimerical, but perhaps after all, noble Miranda crossed their path, they had been very happy in each other and their children.

That it was her Friend's downfall that broke her, we must fear to be the fact, while his realization that he, although through the noblest of motives, had darkened her last years was a wound that never healed in that warm and generous heart. Yet he had lived his life in an immortal era, and his youth had been given to a great cause. Nothing that came afterwards could rob him of that glory. He did not deserve to have his life go down in darkness and it did not. Rejoicing in the knowledge that restitution came to him at the last we lay this bit of laurel on a soldier's grave.

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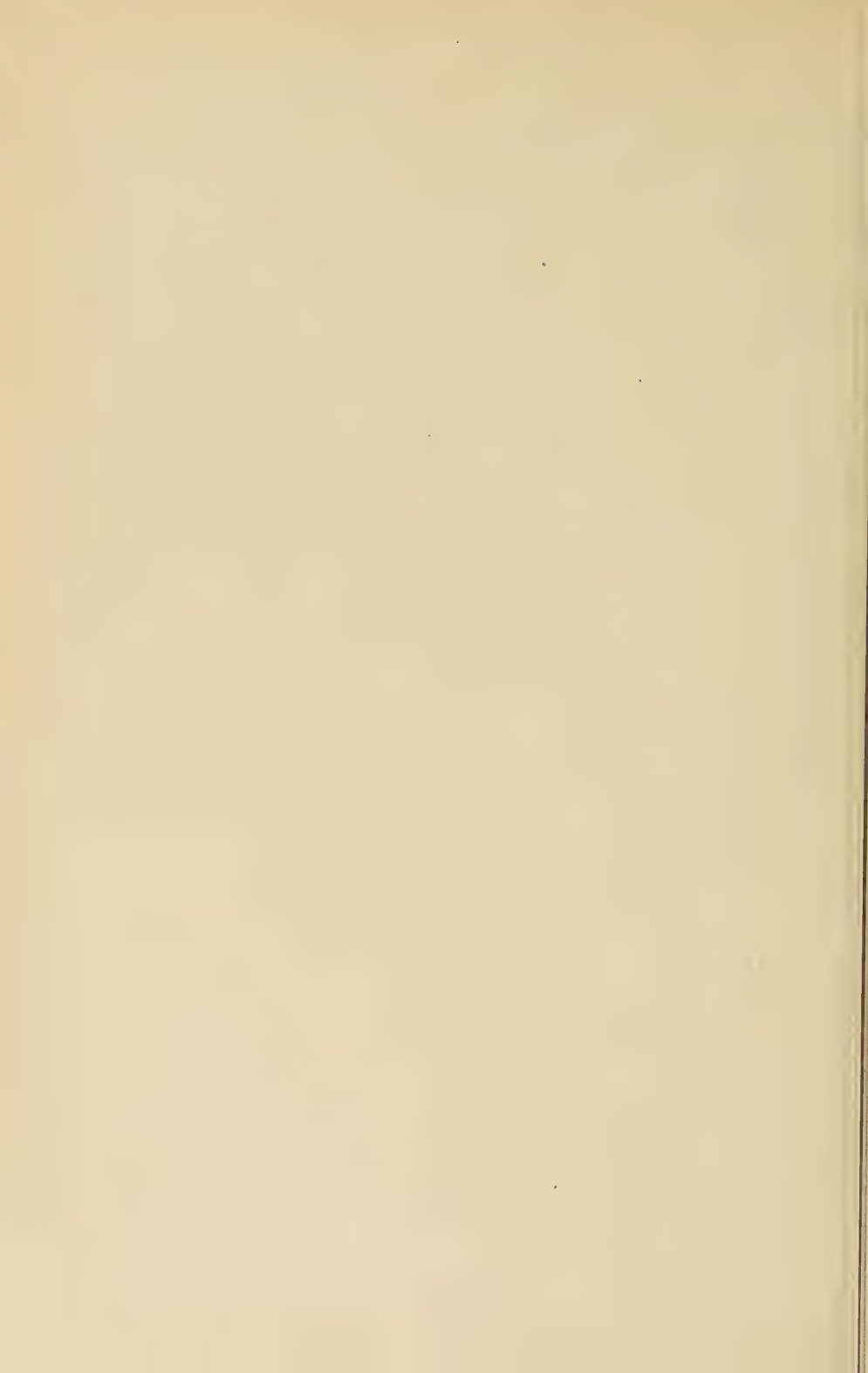
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